

# **POSTHUMOUS NOTES**

**MIDNIGHT NOTES**

**VOLUME IV**

**NUMBER 1**

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## Midnight Notes

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No thanks to the Bostonian Society who sold us a photo of Paul Revere's  
"Boston Massacre" for ten dollars, continuing a tradition started by  
Revere himself.

NB: the symbols attacking the text are ideograms of the language of a  
newly emerging utopian society called "Bolo-Bolo".  
More on this society in the next issue.

GAUGUIN

D'où venons-nous? Que sommes-nous? Où allons-nous? 1897  
Boston, Museum of Fine Arts

# Midnight Querist

## *Where Do We Come From?*

Is the right to work the right to be exploited? Why does the Left make the "right to be exploited" its primary political demand? Is housework work? Do women on welfare work? Did your mother work? What did she get out of it? Is sex work? If so, for whom? Do you work after you retire? Is schoolwork work? Is "unemployment" work? Is work productive? If you work, should you get paid? If your wages rise, do someone else's fall? If the wages in the US rise, do wages in Latin America fall? Vice versa? What is a "high wage"? If wages rise, do profits fall? Should we be afraid of robots? If your job is automated but you continued to get your paycheck in the mail, would you send it back? Is there "meaningful" work? Do you get a raise by working harder? Do you get a raise by going on strike? Do you get a raise because others go on strike? Is there scarcity? If so, of what? Your days, hours and minutes or oil, coal, uranium and natural gas?

## *Who Are We Now?*

Why, in the most liberal state in the US, Massachusetts, in the fall of 1982, did 75% of the electorate vote for the Nuclear Freeze Resolution and 60% vote for the re-institution of capital punishment? Why did we not trust the state to decide our collective death but we did trust the state to decide who is to live and who is to die individually? Would it be different if most of those condemned to death were white? Are "work related fatalities" capital punishment, genocide or necessary accidents? What do you have against the mugger if Reagan is an honest man? Do social workers who "allow" their "clients" to starve or freeze to death deserve the electric chair? Is it more of a "war crime" to burn people in ovens or bombard a city and blow them up in their apartments? Can the US afford national health insurance, an apartment for everyone, a two day work week, a guaranteed income, good and plentiful food for everyone, wine and beer for every dinner table, retirement at forty, warm northern apartments, cool southern homes, long vacations, food for the "hungry of the world"? All, some or none of these?

## *Where Do We Go To?*

When was our last revolution? 1776, 1864? or the 1960s? Jefferson said there should be a revolution every decade, is he to be trusted? When will the next revolution in the US be? Are you willing to wait that long? If not, what are you going to do? Do you advise children to plan for a revolution in your life-time? If not, why not? Who do you have to trust to make a revolution? Is a revolution made like a car, like a shit, like an orgasm, like a house, like a bridge, like a dance, like a child, like a murder, like a brawl, like a play? How low must the profit rate fall before capital dies? Can capital die of senility, of cancer, of a heart attack, of gunshot wounds, of stroke, of suicide, of emphysema, of AIDS? If you "had" an army of one million what would you do? Would you try to seize state power? March into Congress? Arrest Reagan? Shoot the heads of the Fortune 500? Take over the banks and computer network? Distribute food, fuel, housing? Automate factories? Disarm the police and the loyalist army? What is paradise? Utopia? The end of things? Is paradise on earth perpetual fun? What is fun? Is sleep the model of paradise? Is eternal awareness its model? Will your boss go to paradise? Is it death that bothers us or life? The life that has been taken from us? Is this what makes us ghosts?



# Freezing the Movement

The existence of the bomb paralyzes us. Our only motion a gigantic leap backwards in what we take to be the minimal conditions of our existence where by all desires, demands and struggles vanish, only our biological survival appears a valid cause. DON'T KILL US, EXTERMINATE US, BURN US ALIVE, MAKE US WITNESS THE MOST HORRID SPECTACLE THE MIND CAN IMAGINE (????), lived thousands of times in our fears watching the 7 o'clock news, reading the "scientific medical reports." PLEASE LET US LIVE, that's all we ask, forget what this life will be like, forget about our now seemingly utopian dreams...

But isn't this declaring we're dead already? Isn't this admitting the explosion has already worked, that we've already been blown to pieces hundreds of times when, of all our needs and struggle, only the will to survive remains? Worse yet. Isn't this declaration a most dangerous path? For when only people on their knees confront the powers that be, these powers feel godlike and justified, not restrained by the fear that should they dare so much, whoever of us will be left will make life impossible for them as well.

Why a freeze then? Freezing what? Just our brain it seems, in the false assumption that the status quo may hold at this moment any guarantee for us. Freeze is accepting to live with the blackmail of the bomb. Accepting to bring children into a world threatened by a nuclear explosion. Freeze is to allow THEM to periodically toy with the threat of blowing us up. Are we so mad that we can watch on TV a discussion of our future disposal...as if the Jews had been let to witness the plans for the construction of the gas chambers. Are we to bargain -- ask for 10 instead of 100 or 1000 crematory ovens -- debating on their size, expediency and efficiency? Shall we ask how many people will they put to work or out of work? Or do we harbor the secret hope that they are readied for somebody else -- perhaps Europe, more likely the Middle East...



## A Summer of Peace

The summer of 1982 was a summer of extraordinary peace. In the midst of the deepest period of unemployment, cutbacks and bankruptcy rates since the Great Depression, the only movement in the streets was the Peace Movement.

The summer began on June 12 with the largest demonstration in memory gathered in NY City before the disarmament session at the UN. The demonstration took months to plan in Washington and New York, and many throughout the country made it the focus of their political and creative efforts. Almost one million people from all over the US (with other marches on the West Coast) converged on the City. Writes an observant marcher:

The spectacular aspects of the march were the most powerful and even now, a month later, they are still vivid in my mind's eye. I suppose you have seen some of the floats: a blue whale a hundred feet long with a slogan on its side: SAVE THE HUMANS. A white dove actually fabricated from huge bolts of white cotton that was elevated by poles and which the afternoon breeze animated into a floating life high above the people along Fifth Avenue. The puppets I think were seen by millions -- earthy, peasant and fantasy-life figures of women and children that glided fifteen and twenty feet into the air. Banners of all kinds. Absence of uniformity of slogan, poster or placard -- a big difference with the Solidarity Day march in Washington.

The contrast with the other events of the summer was remarkable. From the trade-unionized working class a grave-like silence, with only few desperate exceptions, like the Iowa Beef strike -- a long, bitter strike that led to the calling of the National Guard with guns drawn and weapons carriers in the streets, assisting scabs into the plant. The strike was bitter because, being held in the midst of the lowest level of strike activity since WW II, it was totally isolated and, characteristically, it was not over wage increases but over the size of the "give backs". Only the professional baseball players could strike and win that summer.

With the unwaged part of the working class there was the same peace. It was the beginning of the "riot summer" in the US ghettos and not a riot was to be found in the face of the most devastating attacks on the wages of Blacks and Hispanics. The silence was so noticeable that the New York Times at the end of the summer could editorialize about the silence with a sigh, and the Wall Street Journal sent an investigative report team to find out why Nothing had happened.

The only noticeable movement activity was the Peace-Freeze Movement, which to this day represents the major form of organized protest in the Reagan period.

What is the Freeze Movement and who are the crowds that poured into the streets of New York that summer?

As a mobilization against nuclear war and an appeal for an alternative use of social funds, the Freeze Movement is in many ways a generalization of the post-war Peace Movement and the anti-nuclear energy movement of the 1970s -- not accidentally, the previous largest demonstration in New York was an anti-nuclear energy demo in 1979, that drew a quarter million people. The Freeze Movement is also a regrouping point for many activists, drawn from different quarters, who in the absence of an alternative join the Freeze as a way of re-establishing contacts and test the possibilities of political activity in the 1980s. It would be a mistake, however, to see the Freeze Movement as simply a caldron for different strands of social protest which in the appeal to survival find the only possibility to move at the present. The heavy institutional back-up that has accompanied the Freeze from its beginning, its strategy as well as the fact that the debate concerning its objectives occurs at the highest levels of the State, all indicate that much more is at stake than a spontaneous movement against the perils of nuclear disaster.

To what extent the Freeze Movement represents a novelty with respect to the politics of the 1970s can be seen by comparing its grass root organization, leadership and tactics with those of the anti-nuclear energy movement.

For all the possible critiques one may have had about the anti-nukers, one thing must be singled out as important: it created new configurations on a microscopic social level that brought together people from radically different layers of the division of labor inhabited by the non-industrial worker (though excluding the black and hispanic ghetto dweller). The "affinity group" filled the need for a new social "mix-master" the Party and the Unions could longer provide for in the 70s. We had the "Shads," the "Hard Rains," the "Tomatoes," the "Clams," and the "Abalones." On the contrary, the Freeze Movement is organized along occupational, party and church lines; consider the typical group names of the Freeze Movement:

Lawyers Alliance for Nuclear Disarmament,  
Artists for Nuclear Disarmament,  
Writers for Nuclear Disarmament,  
Communicators for Nuclear Disarmament,  
Computer Programmers for Nuclear Disarmament,  
Educators for Social Responsibility,



Psychologists for Social Responsibility,  
Physicians for Social Responsibility,  
Architects for Social Responsibility,  
Nurses for Social Responsibility,  
United Campuses to Prevent Nuclear War...

And let us not forget Business Alert to Nuclear War; the church groupings, from the Quakers to the Catholics; the Democratic Party fronts and the C.P. fronts too.

Secondly, the leadership of the Freeze Movement is quite different from the relatively diffuse leadership of the anti-nuclear energy movement (though its "no leaders" mythology was delusive). The leaders of the Freeze Movement are sited in Washington, D.C.: in the "neo-liberal" think tanks and the Halls of Congress. Though the rank and file attempt to do more than the dirty work, the real initiatives for the movement come from the Capitol.

Thirdly, while the "median tactic", i.e., the kind of action that typifies a movement, of the anti-nuclear energy movement was "civil disobedience", the median tactic of the Freeze Movement is the vote and the tribute. That is, the Freeze Movement defines itself in a purely representational way, in terms of referenda, congressional seats and legislation and it relates to its base accordingly. Like CISPES, from which it has learned much, it asks for a tribute or tax from its base in order to do the movement work. There is the assumption that the "average person" is too busy for direct political participation and therefore he/she should pay a "tax" to have this work done for them. This is levied both as bodies in a week-end demo or as funds for the organizers.

Finally, the politics of the Freeze. Ostensibly its central objective is to freeze armaments build-ups, in view, presumably, of a future reduction and/or elimination of all nuclear weapons (on this point the jargon of the leadership and of the base often differ in terms of where the accent falls). At the same time, the movement has made it clear that (a) they are not in support of unilateral disarmament on the side of the U.S.A. and (b) they are not ready to support any call for non-interventionist policies. The call is for an alternative type of war and an alternative type of armament, rather than for the abolition of wars and weapons of all types and the end of military intervention by the US. This stand, which represents the official position of the Freeze Movement, has not gone unchallenged, as witnessed by the deep splits and conflicts that have surrounded the preparations for the June 12 demonstration.

Centering around the attempt of the largely white leadership to exclude a black grass roots organization, the cen-

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*Peoples dance and prayer during the Black Death*



tral split undoubtedly had racial overtones. The real issue, however, was whether the campaign literature would link the arms race with US interventionism in the Third World and racism at home.

Initially this was agreed upon at a meeting of the National Coordinating Committee on Jan. 29, 1982. It was also agreed that at least one-third of the members of each leadership body in the campaign would be Third World, and that a caucus of Third World Organizations would choose who would represent them on the leadership bodies. By March 8, however, the "mainstream" groups sent a letter to the "centrist" groups arguing for a new approach that would make these agreements null and void, viz., to form a corporation to produce the June 12 event. The groups that signed the letter included: Riverside Church Disarmament Program, American Friends Service Comm., The National Nuclear Freeze Campaign and SANE. The groups that received it were: Mobilization for Survival, War Resisters League, US Peace Council, Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, and the NY Public Interest Research Group (NYPIRG). The object of the exclusionary effort was the Black United Front and a variety of white left-wing party formations. As the spring progressed, the splits between the mainstream, the mediating, white "centrist" and the black and left organizations festered, until the threat of having a separate demonstration forced the mainstream to opt for "harmony" and allow Third World leadership in the June 12 Rally Committee. The tension, however, was so intense that there were rumors of fist-fights behind the stage, while Bruce Springsteen played for the gathered million, between black speakers and rally organizers, who were arguing for a few more minutes for the "Boss".

Possibly the lesson of that summer's experience is the reason why nothing has since happened on Freeze "mass front": no local initiatives, no recruitment drives. The Freeze Movement seems to have frozen itself, while its institutional character has become increasingly predominant. Nowadays the discussion about the Freeze is largely a Congressional matter, while at a typical Freeze or Ground Zero meeting one is impressed by the jackets and ties,



The Knight



The Sailor

and the evidence of official backing. Even William Colby, former director of the CIA has come out in support of it, thus making a sham of Reagan's claim that the movement is backed and "ran" by the KGB.

The reason for the impressive backing the Freeze movement is receiving from many politicians as well as the media is quite simple. Behind the Freeze is a new military-industrial complex, representing that part of US capital which is sceptical about the future of Reagan's "development model" and is consequently in search of more stable options for the US economic and war machine. Two major concerns shape the programs of the Freeze supporters: (1) the conviction that nuclear weapons are militarily obsolete, for the threat to capital's control does not reside in mass territorial war, but in diffuse, molecular crises that cannot possibly be resolved by nuclear means. Could, e.g., nuclear bombs be used to restore control in El Salvador or Nicaragua? Could the P.L.O. have been dislodged by a nuclear bomb on Lebanon? While certainly not insensitive to the ideological value of Reagan's cold war, anti-Russian campaign, the Freezers represent a call to "facing reality", which means facing the fact that the real danger for capital at present is in each country -- internal subversion -- and therefore pinning all hopes on "the Bomb" is a suicidal route.

As Admiral Bobby Inman (the real head of the CIA in the early Reagan years) declared in explaining his resignation from the CIA in April 1982: "I reject out of hand the likelihood that we could be surprised with a Pearl Harbor kind of attack. And the same pretty well holds true for the eastern front, central part of Europe." The problem is rather "following political and economic trends abroad...dealing with instability in many areas of the world, trying to cope with the fervor of religious movements" (NYT, April 28, 1982).

(2) Not only is the bomb ineffectual from a military point of view, its economics as well worry many politicians. To put it flatly, the Bomb does not create jobs or at least, not enough jobs and not for the type of workers who have traditionally represented the backbone of the American working class. There is a widespread fear,

particularly in Democratic quarters that the dismantling of mass production the Reagan-nuclear model is already causing may in the long run produce irreconcilable social contradictions. They fear social upheavals, as hundreds of thousands of blue collar workers are thrown out of their jobs and forced to either disappear in the cracks of the system or to accept the minimum-wage type jobs that so far have been reserved for women and immigrants but the crisis of the mass industry sector is leaving as the only option for white male workers as well. There is also a fear that being based on astronomically high procurements for a few selected companies, the nuclear war economy may lead to a wasteful/unproductive use of capital's resources. A typical example of this type of reasoning is the appeal, recently launched, by the New York City Council calling for a Jobs with Peace Week:

"The Reagan administration's military build up has not only increased the threat of war, but deepened this country's social and economic crisis. With a proposed military budget of \$234 billion, it's easy to see why the nation's unemployment rolls continue to swell. Military spending creates fewer jobs than virtually any other economic expenditure. (*italics ours*) And as working people suffer so does our economy in general. Military spending robs us of vital talent, capital and natural resources, lessening our ability to produce high quality goods and services."

Such considerations have caused many politicians to become outspokenly critical of Reagan's Cold War bi-polarism and to embrace the Freeze Movement, whose success would undoubtedly lead to a redirection in military spending priorities, away from few high-tech and costly weapons towards the relaunching of more, lighter, cheaper conventional arms. Economic and military considerations perfectly match in the program behind the Freeze, as it allows both for more "flexibility" and efficiency in dealing with insurgency at home and abroad, and for the possibility of a new "Keynesian plan" based on state intervention in the economy for the re-industrialization of the U.S.A. On the basis of this platform, different forces are today joining in the call for a Freeze: unionists a la Winpisinger, who are presently seeing their base vanishing under the impact of mass industry lay-offs, state planners like Feliz Rohatyn, Keynesian Democrats like Kennedy and Tsongas, church and community leaders, the social democratic left. All come together in the belief that a different social contract is possible from that proposed by the Reagan administration -- one, presumably, in which national security, economic profitability, and social peace can be harmoniously integrated and planned.

# Small, Cheap, Many

The main publicist for a new military strategic thinking is undoubtedly James Fallow. His book, National Defense, published in the first year of the Reagan administration, laid out the main arguments for the new approach, nicely capturing the tone of a former Vietnam war resister who has come back to the fold but demands "humanity" and "reasonability" from the system as the price. His strategy in military spending is to build cheap and many -- small is beautiful in military weapons as long as they are bountiful. Consider the procurement list recommended by Washington Monthly, Fallow's and the "neo-liberal" House organ:

## Weapons the Military Could Use

1. A light, maneuverable long-range bomber to replace the B-52.
2. Increased procurement of A-7 attack plane now used only by the national guard.
3. Increased procurement of A-10 close support plane.
4. Renewed procurement of F-4 and F-5 fighters.
- 5 Small, diesel-powered submarines, both for attack and missile-launching capability.
6. Cheap, small "fast boats" that avoid radar.
7. 106mm recoilless (cannon) rifle for use as anti-tank weapon.
8. CAU-8 30mm cannon for use as an anti-tank weapon.
9. Increased procurement of sidewinder missiles.
10. Battalions of motorcycles to improve maneuver warfare capability.
11. Increased procurement of Remote Piloted vehicles (unmanned target locators and distractions for enemy anti-aircraft).
12. Small, light tank for the marines.

The key words are "light," "small," "cheap," and "maneuverable." Fallow and friends, however, are not only critical of the Pentagon's excessive reliance on high-tech, "magical" solutions to the problem of defense. One of their main targets is also the "culture of procurement," which in their eyes is guilty of a total disregard for the question of economic and military productivity:

(There) is corruption, but not in the sense most often assumed. The bribes, the trips to the Caribbean in corporate aircraft, do occur, but they distort the essence, as Abscam distorts the essence of congressional irresponsibility, and payoffs in the General Services Administration distort the pathology of the civil service. The real damage is not spectacular but routine: it is the loss of purpose in the daily operation of the military machine, the substitution of procurement for defense. This is the true corruption, and it affects all the relevant groups: soldiers, who are converted into sales agents,

rewarded for skills that count in real estate; contractors, whose productive core is corroded by contact with the nonperformance culture, and finally the rationality and civility of public discussion about defense, which are sabotaged by the hidden purpose of continuing to spend money. Here we have the voice of reason, who is only asking that the job be done right.

Now compare Fallow's earnest prose with the nervous complement of a Business Week team that in 1990 set out to study the possibilities of re-industrialization in the US:

Too often chief executives send mixed signals to their staffs. On the one hand they demand creativity and on the other they regard numbers...the easiest way for executives to feel comfortable with alien technological or marketing concepts is to devise a technique for measuring them. Not only had internal rate of return and discounted cash flow replaced educated instincts for deciding on new projects, but quantitative approaches -- or at best, formularized ones -- have even pervaded human resource management. The old days of motivating employees by example and by general day-to-day closeness to the field have given way to consultants' techniques such as behavior modification climate and attitude control and the like. It is little wonder that top management has become isolated from its employees.

The rhetoric of "loss of traditional values," "mistaking means for ends," and the theme of "domination of technique" permeate both these efforts aimed at finding out what has gone wrong with the capitalist totality.

But the relation between Fallow's thinking and that of the re-industrializers is by no means rhetorical. Not only are both in support of "jobs with Freeze" and convinced that true national security cannot be achieved unless US industry is re-modernized and "useful work" is provided for millions of unemployed Americans. They are equally convinced that once waste and inefficiency -- in the Pentagon as well as Detroit -- are eliminated, once a "path of sanity" is pursued in economic and military spending and the money saved from nuclear bombs and Trident submarines is redirected to "socially productive purposes", the US can be made a safe place for investments and American capital can "come back home" again.

The repatriation of US capital and the end of the US role as cop of the world is another important goal inspiring the politics of the freeze. Capital investments abroad, in fact, have long ceased to be attractive, in view of the 'lack of stability' in many Third World countries and



the acceleration of European wages through the 1970s past US wage rates. It is also complained that the US bears a disproportionate share of the cost of 'defending the world,' thus giving a 'free ride' to Japan and the NATO allies, who in the meantime spend their money making better TV sets, computers and automobiles. As a consequence, there is a renewed interest in the US proletariat, whose demands appear substantially curbed by the combined attack on social-welfare spending and employment levels. In the perspective of the freezers the US should get out of Europe and many of its advance posts in the Third World, concentrate its domination in selected spheres of influence (Central and South America being the likely candidates), and reconstruct its productive basis at home making it once again competitive on the world market. As a Business Week re-industrialization 'team' put it, in a section of their report entitled "Export or Die":

the United States, unlike its major competitors, has a rapidly growing labor force, much of it unskilled, and US wages will be declining re-

lative to those abroad. The economy will have therefore the resources to staff mass-production industries, such as autos and textiles, that the other advanced countries will begin to de-emphasise because of incipient labor shortages and rising wages. But the United States will have to make these industries much more efficient, since it will be coming into increased competition with the newly industrialized countries of Asia and Latin America, where labor costs will be much lower.

A capital-investment-based imperialism is thus to be substituted with an export-based imperialism, whose success, however, would depend on the willingness of the US labor force to accept wages competitive with those of the Third World, the termination of confrontational politics with the Soviet Union, and the ability to "find more suitable, cost-effective means, ranging from foreign aid to military intervention in specific situations abroad" (Business Week) in case of eventual disruptions of the international capitalist trade.



Quick firepower: This modified dune buggy, equipped with a grenade launcher, can hit speeds of 85 mph.

## The Freeze and the Draft

"Is there anywhere where our theory that the organization of labor is determined by the means of production is more brilliantly confirmed than in the human slaughter industry?" (Marx to Engels--1866)

Inevitably the freezers/re-industrializers, through their whole spectrum, have radically different views from those of the Reagan administration concerning the draft. As its cautious, temporizing way of handling resisters to registration showed, the Reagan administration favors the present, post-Vietnam, volunteer army, which is a mirror, functional image of the class composition Reaganomics is fostering. On the bottom Reagan's army is a "free

enterprise zone" of labor, conscripted by wages that are made appealing by the starkness of the labor market. On the top are the well-paid professionals and consultants required by a high-tech war machine. When the liberals of today rehearse what used to be an old conservative cry: "Money is not enough! You cannot build an army on money alone," Reagan, with Milton Friedman behind him, can answer, "Why not? We run the rest of the damn system on it." By contrast, it is the liberal freezers who are presently campaigning for a return to the draft:

Before anything else, we must recognize that a functioning military requires bonds of trust, sacrifice, respect within its ranks, and similar

bonds of support and respect between the Army and the nation it represents ...I believe that will not happen unless we reinstate the draft. (Fallow)

On a more prosaic note the editors of the Washington Monthly who, after complaining that with the AVF (All Volunteer Force) "most Americans need never have direct contact with military life," point out that the draft would also save money. They too, however, recognise that "the most important benefit can't be measured in dollars and cents." Indeed. For how can the re-industrializers hope to fight their trade wars in Africa and Latin America when their troops are almost all black and hispanic? Not to mention that the mixture, on which the AVF is based, of highly paid technicians (engineers, intelligence consultants, etc.), mercenaries (select counter-insurgency forces) and a mass of poorly paid troopers is a very volatile one. Finally, should the promise of a full employment economy materialize, why would the white youth join a volunteer army, unless the wages were prohibitively high? In the words of the Washington Monthly:

Pentagon planners like to point out that last year they met their recruiting goals with enlistees of improved quality. What they don't like to mention is the major reason for these gains: the worst economic recession since the 1930s. If the economy revives, the recruiting problems will return, particularly since the national recruiting pool of 15-21 year olds will decline by 15% by 1990.

What the liberals and freezers do not consider is that if the Reagan model prevails in the long run, there will be no revival of full employment to undermine "American Patriotism." What they also underestimate, in their disgusting ejaculations about the "O1' Army," is the resistance of 15-21 year olds to the "Officer and Gentleman" routine.

Their stance to the draft, then, makes it clear that the re-industrializers need the support of the "new military" thinkers as much as the latter need them. No one expects to sell the draft to white youth, much less to their parents, unless it is part of a package deal, offering them a "real future," i.e., a guarantee of secure employment in exchange for their readiness to "sacrifice." For, aside from mass jailings, the only credible weapon against draft evasion would be employment discrimination; but if the average white youth did not have the possibility of a "good job", why would he register for the draft and show up when called? Why die to defend the country if life in it does not pay? Without re-industrialization, the hope of a largely white, mass army is an impossible reality.

Thus, to the white youth the re-industrializers offer the old jobs back, undoubtedly at lower wages (backed up by the whip of international competition) but with the promise of lower levels of exploitation (labor participation in management decisions being a usual feature of their new "social contract"). Also, they add the promise of a deal with the Russians to safeguard them, their families and their laboriously gained houses from the only possible threat to their physical existence: nuclear war. They promise a more rational, poly-valent world: no more titanic struggles between the forces of Good and Evil, fought with MXs and lasers; just a few trade wars plus a limited dose of social democracy in selected areas of the Third World, plenty of jobs and some charity for the basket cases.

## Nuclear Strategies

The political economy behind the freeze is largely a return to the Keynesian state, based on mass assembly production, impelled by the restoration of US primacy in international export-trade and a revived mass army. Whether this economic set-up is envisioned as a "final solution" or as a temporary provision to ease the pain of the transition to a computer-run economy is difficult to assess. Democrats like Jerry Brown do not hide their preference for a Silicon Valley-type of economic development, while others, on the socialist side of the re-industrialization spectrum, seem to believe that the assembly line has long-term therapeutic qualities and will be with us for many years to

come. What is certain, however, is that the Freezers-re-industrializers are in a position as untenable as Reagan's, since they repropose a model of class relations the working class has already considered unacceptable. They go back, in fact, to square one of the crisis, hoping that workers in this country have been tamed after the last bout with Depression. Despite the differences, one common assumption shared by all re-industrializers is the need to lower American wages and convince the US proletariat to accept a reduced standard of living for the future. This feat will be presumably achieved by the establish-

ment of a triple alliance between business, government and unions, who, forfeiting their alleged traditional opposition, will jointly decide what is best for the "public good." On this point the programs of the social-democratic left are in total conformity with those of the right, as witnessed by a proposal for a "Rational Re-industrialization Strategy" recently published by Socialist Review (n. 63-64) put forward by Dan Luria and Jack Russel.

Taking for granted that "the power and needs of private capital will continue to dominate the national and regional economy for the rest of the century," the authors claim that a center-left corporatism is on the agenda:

Corporatist, as we use the term, calls for voluntary cooperation between capital, labor and the state beyond the normal institutions of bourgeois democracy (e.g., elections, union contracts), it asserts the need for economic planning from above as the basis of this tripartite integration, and seeks common ground on which to contain conflict and organize growth. (*Italics ours*)

The only difference in this leftist proposal from others coming from the business press and the corporate planners is a projected "distant possibility" that the factory will become an immense university, where workers will be educated in the complexities of production and the bargaining process. They too insist, however, that we shed any "liberal, populist, communitarian, infantile-militant illusion" beginning with the "illusion that the sixties re-distributive programs can be replayed in the 80s."

It is difficult to predict the future; yet, for all the beaming reports about their ability to "put America back to work," it is impossible to imagine that the re-industrialization model can have much success. Certainly, today workers are lining up to get "any job." But should full-employment materialize would they peacefully return to the five-day-a-week routine on the line at reduced wages, after years of "blue collar blues" and the increasing awareness of the fantastic possibilities that exist to robotize most of the work in this country? And how far will wages be reduced if American workers are expected to be competitive with workers all over the world? If it is true, e.g., that a textile worker in India earns 38¢ an hour (whatever that means), how can any worker in this country even bargain for the minimum wage? Finally, is fighting for a promised utopia of "more work and less pay" the only alternative to Reagan's "nuclear madness"?

We cannot decode time future, but we can look at the past, and this tells us that a collective plunge to the bottom cannot save us a Reaganite apocalypse. Only the lifting of the bottom, with the explosion of the Black Movement,



The Rich Man

put an end to cold war politics and the threat of atomic war in the late 1950s and the early 1960s. It was Watts and the "hot summers" in the US cities that shifted the war on the Russians to a "war on poverty" at home. It is only because of the apparent lack of any genuine resistance to its plans that the Reagan administration can at present play its war-games and terrorize us with the absurd threat of a Russian take over of the world, a threat whose only purpose is to justify the cuts in our standard of living and keep us busy struggling just for the right to live no matter how.

For why should the "U.S.A." wage a nuclear war with the "U.S.S.R."? First of all there is no U.S. and U.S.S.R., but a class system in both countries, i.e., a Soviet and American capitalist structure and a Soviet and American working class. On the workers' side, are we to believe that Russian men and women are interested in taking over N.Y.C. or Detroit or engage in nuclear disaster any more than American women and men want to conquer Moscow or Siberia and risk millions of deaths in the process? On the capitalist side, why should the US or the Soviet government want to destroy each other when they have drawn for decades immense benefits from their cold-war and iron-curtain politics, keeping their workers in line with the threat of "the other side"? Granted that Absolute nuclear war is out of the question since it would wipe out the winners as well as the losers, a partial nuclear warfare would be possible only if both Russia and the US government decided to launch it in their mutual interest to prevent the masses in both countries

to gain too much power. It would only be possible if such a crisis opened in both countries at the same time to make a swap -- Kiev for Detroit -- desirable; and most important, if the guarantee existed that a massive destruction of a targeted sector of the Soviet and US working class did not lead to such a revulsion as to cause the collapse of both systems. Who would get up and go to work, lunch box and all, and who would plan to have a kid or save to buy a house after seeing millions of his/her fellow beings destroyed in a controlled/partial holocaust???

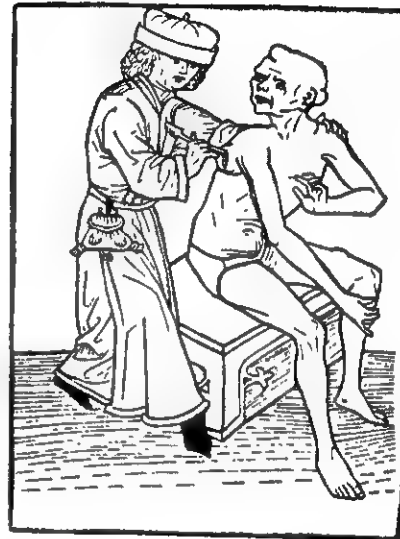
This, in fact, should be our strategy today. Not simply demand that they let us live, but make it clear that any attempt to realise their threats would have catastrophic consequences for them as well. Wars have always been high-risk gambles on capital's side and moments of deep instability for the system -- for any social contract begins to break down when death on a mass scale becomes part of the bargain. This was the case in many countries of Europe after WWI and WWII -- and the lesson has not gone lost, as can be seen from a congressional study prepared for the Joint Committee on Defense Production, published in March 1979, at the beginning of the arms build-up. The study ends with a chapter on "The Social and Political Implications of Nuclear Attacks", in which we find these telling words concerning a post-nuclear environment:

A significant risk of total loss of political legitimacy may develop, accompanied perhaps by real efforts on the part of survivors to change the leadership or the system forcibly or, at a local level, to take matters into their own hands. While a sense of national emergency and solidarity may operate to sustain the support of survivors for some time in the post-attack period, the failure of the government at any level to achieve rapid and meaningful recovery progress, to explain satisfactorily the causes of the attack, or to demonstrate a genuine concern for social needs and pre-attack values could lead to widespread dissatisfaction and perhaps result in serious challenges to the authority of government itself.

This fear is our greatest defense against nuclear war: the unpredictability of working class response can make nuclear war impossible. Yet, it is this very uncertainty that the Freeze attacks, for it commits itself to the same institutional process that would bring about the war in the first place (as the German Social-Democrats voted "reluctantly" for war credits at the start of WWI). In Nuclear War: what's in it for you?, the official book of the Ground Zero group, the description of the post-nuclear scenario has no mention of any insurrectional consequences or possibilities. Rather we are presented

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#### BLACK DEATH



A plague doctor examining a body. 15th century woodcut

with the picture of a griping, depressed population whose most dangerous form of activity is some occasional food riot and dabbling in the black market. This is no accident. Such an image is the product of how the Freezers want us to be in the pre-nuclear stage: upset, but not so upset as to do anything rash. They are so afraid that their ranks may get out of control that even after their electoral successes in 1981 and 1982 (where the freeze resolution passed in many states and localities) they slowed down their mobilization process, afraid that things were rushing along too fast for other elements of their plan to mature. Thus, while presumably we are on the verge of total annihilation ("we must proceed with all haste" is their slogan) they are postponing the Apocalypse till the election of 1984!!!

The Freeze movement creates the very political conditions for the state to fight a partial nuclear war: a docile, patient mass waiting for the leaders and experts to solve the problem through respectable legislative means. Our best strategy is to preserve and intensify the "surprising autonomous" element of our struggle. It is best for two reasons: (a) it attacks the weak foundation of all "nuclear war-fighting" policies and (b) it has worked before, most recently in the "strange victories" of the anti-nuclear-reactor movement.



It is only with an extensive "civil defense" apparatus that it is even theoretically possible for there to be even a question of nuclear war-fighting. Whatever the technology available, unless the nuke war-fighters can convincingly demonstrate that "the masses" can be "protected" (i.e., controlled) to some extent during an atomic exchange and its aftermath, the very distinction between the policy of Mutually Assured Destruction (MAD) and Nuclear War-Fighting fails. So the Reagan administration has pushed for a leap in funding for civil defense, e.g., in the spring of 1982 it officially requested 4.3 billion dollars for a period of 7 years while, unofficially, the figure is more than 10 billion dollars for 5 years. And the ideological stage-setting from Reagan on down has been on "accentuating the positive" in the face of the nuclear Armageddon. Consider the chorus:

Charles Kupperman (executive director of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency's General Advisory Committee):

It means that, you know, it would be tough (after a nuclear war). It would be a struggle to reconstitute society that we now have. It certainly wouldn't be the same society as prior to an exchange...But in terms of having an organized nation, and having enough means left after the war to reconstitute itself, I think it entirely possible.

Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) publication on December 1980:

With reasonable protective measures, the United States could survive nuclear attack and go on to recovery within a relatively few years.

L.O. Giuffrida (head of FEMA under Reagan): (Nuclear war) would be a terrible mess, but it wouldn't be unmanageable.

W. Chipman (Giuffrida's assistant at FEMA): Someone mentioned the Black Death, and I was impressed a few weeks ago in reading about that during the period of the Hundred Year's war. Here was a catastrophe that killed a third of the population of England. And yet these people were able to mount an expeditionary force to France and

fight the Battle of Poitiers six or eight years after the epidemic. I do not know what this says about the ethics of the human race, but it shows there is a certain resilience and toughness of society.

It was this very Chipman, who when asked if "American institutions" would survive all-out nuclear war with the Soviet Union replied, "I think they would eventually, yeah. As I say, the ants eventually build another anthill."

In the face of these optimistic chants we have groups like the Physicians for Social Responsibility shrilling the "negative" antiphonically. For example, they point out that the very ability to control casualties in the event of an Absolute nuclear war requires a socio-medical fabric that would have been effectively destroyed in the initial seconds of the thermo-nuclear blasts...especially in the form of evaporated doctors. They envision more than 50% of the population destroyed immediately and 70-90% of the fixed capital obliterated; plagues decimating the survivors; lukemias, cancers and mutants sprouting for generations to come...if there are any. They revive an almost fourteenth century rhetoric:

In many areas radiation levels will be so high that corpses will remain untouched for weeks on end. With transportation destroyed, survivors weakened, and a multiplicity of post-shelter reconstruction tasks to be performed, corpse disposal will be remarkably complicated. In order to bury the dead, an area 5.7 times (sic) as large as the city of Seattle would be required for the cemetery.

Thus we are caught between the terror of the "crack-pot" realists of Reagan's limited nuclear war and the terror of the "scientific" Jeremiahs of the Apocalypse.

Our approach would reject both types of terrorism and take up the theme of the Black Death that so inspired Mr. Chipman with that sacred awe of human stupidity. If he had read on in his history book he would have been somewhat dismayed because



The Merchant



"THE FACTORY AND THE  
FIGHTING LINE ARE ONE"  
THE NAVY THANKS YOU



The Councillor



whatever the military exploits of the English longbowmen at Poitiers, the consequences of the Great Plague led directly to the end of Feudalism and the opening of the "Golden Age of the English Proletariat." For immediately after the Black Death, wages rose dramatically for a generation; then in an attempt to control them the feudal state tried to impose repressive statutes and poll taxes that led to the Peasant's Revolt of 1381. In the ranks of the rebels were "primitive communists" like John Ball who preached: "things cannot go well in England, nor ever will until everything shall be in common...and all distinctions leveled." Though that revolt was defeated, after a successful takeover of London, the pace of collapse of feudal institutions intensified. So that a century later a "counter-revolution" (i.e., capitalism) had to be launched to preserve class rule from the collapse of serfdom and the regime of high wages in England.

Such a history lesson might even make a numbskull like Mr. Chipman revise his notions of the "ant-like" nature of his fellow creatures. For it would show that the root of Reagan's nuclear war-fighting is not to be found in the MXs, the Pershing 2s or the cruise missiles but in the assumption of a fundamental attachment of the working class to capitalist relations and capitalist reproduction whatever they require. Once that premise is shaken, the delicate electronic innards of these machines and the extra-terrestrial powers lodged in their nosecones prove to be silly though dangerous toys.



But we need not go back to the days of "merrie England" to see that the most effective tactic in the struggle against nuclear war is to make the "autonomy" of the working class from capital evident for all to see by making our needs and demands primary. This has been demonstrated over and over again in the struggle against nuclear power plants. For the most troublesome stumbling block to the building of new plants has not been the technological foul-ups but the "social" factor, viz., the inability to be able to come up with "reasonable" evacuation plans in the event of an accident. Our Brooklyn friends write us of the latest such incident, on April 15, 1983 in statements made on the advisability of continuing operation of the Indian Point nuclear plants:

One of the two reasons that the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the Westchester County Executive, Andrew O'Roarke, have given for saying that emergency planning won't work during an accident at the nuclear plant at Indian Point is that the bus drivers might refuse the work of evacuating people during the accident...this has been talked about for a while but has never been stated so forcefully -- O'Roarke says the plants should be shut down until the bus driver "problem" can be "worked" out.

Thus the very FEMA that is so gallantly planning to manage the nuclear war "mess" and bring about the "recovery within a relatively few years" admits defeat in a relatively less serious eventuality, a nuclear power plant accident, at the hands of bus drivers who they suspect will very reasonably violate "regulations" and "first gather their families or whatever and split." Similarly, when we not only as bus drivers but workers in general, put our interests above the interests of capital, then the whole system of terror breaks down. The very presupposition and end of nuclear war: to terrorize and control for the purpose of producing more and more work, cannot survive if we are moving out of the orbit of control.

So the answer to Reagan's nuclear war threat is not the Freeze and re-industrialization, for they merely repackage the presuppositions of nuclear war to freeze and preserve them. No, it is only by refusing to organize on the basis of universal competition in the national-international labor market -- whether our competition is defined as other workers around the world or robots -- and fighting for the reduction of the work week for everybody with an increase of wages and a policy of "full employment" achieved through "full payment for all the work we do already" -- for who is not working in this country except the rich? -- whether in money or wealth (i.e., houses, food, medical care, etc.) or both, that we can not only turn back nuclear war but we would be in a position to want to!

# Elegy for E.P. Thompson

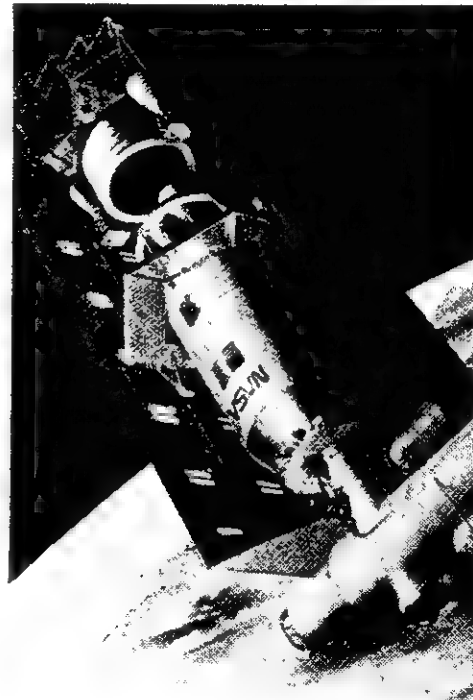
How could anyone accuse E.P. Thompson of ignoring the working class and its struggle in the analysis of anything central to the development of international capitalism? Of all writers on the Left, Thompson probably has done the most to teach us that capital in its attempt to form an industrial proletariat confronted the determined resistance of a work force which saw itself as coerced and exploited by a property-controlling employer class. His books and articles have shown us that the central institutions and practices of developing capitalism, from the organization of production in factories to the rituals of 'criminal' 'justice,' must be understood as responses to this resistance, as societal mechanisms for turning unwilling labor power into disciplined, quiescent producers of surplus value. It is Thompson and the young historians he has trained who have shown us how to revise the history of the 18th and 19th centuries to place the development and struggles of the working class at the center of the story, where they belong.

We are therefore surprised to find that Thompson's analysis of one of the most important institutional complexes in twentieth century capitalism -- the nuclear war industry -- utterly ignores the fundamental part played by war policy and its enormous economic base in organizing the expropriation and accumulation of surplus value. After proving to us that so many of the practices of early capitalist society served the accumulation process by effecting the organization of labor, Thompson seems to forget that capitalism's raison d'etre has not changed in two hundred years -- any more than its principal obstacle has ceased to be the organization of us.

Thompson's most cogent accounts of the nuclear war establishment appear in his "Notes on Exterminism" (New Left Review, Spring/Summer 1980) and in a book just published, Beyond the Cold War (Pantheon, 1982). In both places he presents the war establishments of the NATO countries -- the US especially -- and the USSR as self-generating, self-sustaining complexes of belief, ideology, economic institution, and social practice. These practices and the larger belief systems they have spawned in their respective societies are 'exterminist,' in Thompson's splendid bit of jargon, because they inevitably push these societies toward the nuclear confrontation(s) which will result in 'the extermination of multitudes, indeed, of us all. Thompson recognizes, of course, that the effects of war policy permeate capitalist society, affecting profoundly the values and political practices of the western democracies, and even more profoundly, their economies, given the massive expenditures required to support nuclear armaments. He thus introduces his

category of 'exterminism' as 'something less than (a) social formation, and something a good deal more than (a) cultural or ideological attribute' in order to make the important point that the war establishment is a matter of institutions with strong economic foundations -- a matter of fully developed social systems -- and not just a lot of ideas in the minds of generals and right-wing politicians.

What Thompson does not do is to ask the fundamental question which any marxist social analysis must always ask, viz., what function do these institutions and practices fulfill in furthering the larger aims of a capitalist society -- how do they advance the process of accumulation? what part do they play in sustaining/reconstructing current modes of production? how are they instruments for the organization and control of labor power? The closest he comes to dealing with these questions is a brief reference to 'the competitive drive of arms manufacturers' as one of the several factors sustaining nuclear arms development in the west; and he cites with qualified approval the view that the defense industries are and are intended by government policy to be 'the leading sector' of the economy, responsible for major innovations in technology, hence productivity, and charged with leading the economy out of its recurrent recessions via the massive





appropriations it absorbs and transforms. But these economic functions of defense policy are cited as items on a list of many apparently equal, in Thompson's eyes, explanatory considerations. No special importance, let alone priority, is assigned to class, as opposed, e.g., to symbolic or ideological functions of the war establishment.

This rejection of traditional marxist categories seems particularly odd since Thompson is brilliantly effective in demonstrating the irrationality of

of nuclear 'defense' strategy as a military strategy and of nuclear arms as an instrument of international politics. He argues effectively for the bankruptcy of the older 'deterrence' theory and for the manifest absurdity of current NATO claims that the new generation of weapons (Pershings, cruise missiles, neutron bombs) permit confinement of a nuclear exchange to a limited manageable area -- all of Western Europe, for example -- and so provide a useable military and diplomatic option. He argues this case so effectively that we are left wondering why admittedly very "smart" people have for years operated a belief system and institutional set-up which, in terms of ordinary means-ends rationality, plainly is insane.

Thompson's explanation is that a series of factors largely internal to the process of producing weapons and weapons policy join together to create a powerful 'inertial thrust' in the direction of ever larger war-making establishments. The point of his 'inertia' metaphor is to stress that weapons development and war-strategy are self-sustaining and self-generating, not dependent for their continued existence and growth on their ability to satisfy societal needs or functions other than those of 'defense'. Thus nuclear armaments and their elaborate delivery systems are constantly renewed and reconstructed because of enormous internal pressures exerted by generals and the weapons technologists themselves; new strategies like that of 'theater nuclear war' are generated because frustrated and impatient militarists demand new game plans to utilize the superior power of their new technologies; militarists and arms manufacturers interlock with



government bureaucracies and become skillful in spreading their ideology through news media and in the organs of state; a large state security and policing apparatus grows up around them, ostensibly to protect against the Soviet enemy, but also to enhance the control of information and inhibit opposition, thereby enabling the formation and dissemination, unchallenged, of a supportive ideology. This 'inertial thrust' has brought us to the point where, in Thompson's excellent formulation, '... the USA and the USSR do not have military-industrial complexes: they are such complexes.' Militarism is founded in a circumscribed institutional base -- the military, arms manufacturers, civilian defense bureaucracy, state security apparatus, the scientific establishment of weapons research -- but its influence extends into all areas of social life, to such an extent that this now powerful 'social system,' as Thompson rightly call it, is able to stamp its priorities on the society as a whole, determining the direction of economic growth, moulding the entire culture.

This explanation must be taken seriously because it makes it very clear that the policy of nuclear war expresses deep structural characteristics of the society and economy, and so cannot be taken simply as the outcome of machinations by a clique of generals, politicians and industrialists. No conspiracy theory of the cold war can do justice to this fact that 'defense' now designates an entire social system, with a social system's capacity to sustain and perpetuate itself.

The merit of Thompson's inertial metaphor is the graphic fashion in which it makes this point. Yet the image he creates for us goes fundamentally wrong. For it is, in effect, the image of a gigantic cancer, rapidly taking over the host body, but deriving its impulse to growth entirely from within itself. Like a cancer, the defense apparatus fulfills no constructive functions for the larger body. Its existence and rapid growth are indeed irrational, as Thompson stresses repeatedly, but the irrationality is an artifact of his analysis, due to the fact that he assigns it no central role in furthering the fundamental objectives of a capitalist society.

The enormity of Thompson's failure is most evident in his assertion that 'exterminism does not (call into being its own antagonist). Exterminism simply confronts itself. It does not exploit a victim: it confronts an equal (viz., the exterminist social systems of the Soviet Bloc).' The claim is explicit: Exterminist social systems of war are not to be understood as instruments of class oppression or as factors in class struggle: 'Class struggle continues in many forms, across the globe. But exterminism itself is not a "class issue": it is a human issue.' And the movement against nuclear

war is not a program of resistance for the working class against its rulers; it is 'the defense of civilization, the defense of the ecosphere -- the human ecological imperative.'

As always in Thompson's writing, there is an important element of truth here: If 'working class' is defined narrowly, after the fashion of classical marxism, then exterminism is not merely an instrument of working class oppression, since all who live and breathe and labor are oppressed by it. In the Midnight Notes, however, 'working class' has always been defined broadly, to include all who contribute directly, through labor waged and unwaged, to the production of value to be expropri-



17 Page from the Codex Dresdensis showing the destruction of the world by water from the mouth of a sky dragon

ated and accumulated by a ruling class which controls for its own advantage the means of production. Thompson's politically sanitary formulation wholly obscures this essential fact: the social systems of exterminism, like all enduring social systems in a capitalist society, exist and develop because they are effective instruments in the organization of the society for maximal-

ly efficient (per the judgement of its rule) pursuit of the expropriation and accumulation of surplus value, given the modes of production available in the current phase of capitalism's history (modes of production now undergoing radical change: itself a central factor in the evolution of war policy). The policies and programs of these social systems are as irrational as Thompson thinks, in their own advertised terms, as military and diplomatic instruments for preserving "Western Society." But it does not follow that they are irrational or that the rulers who continue to operate them are fools and madmen. For again, their function is to facilitate the repression, development, organization of labor power, waged and unwaged. The 'defense' they are principally charged with is the defense of an exploitative social and economic system against ourselves, and they are rational as long as they hold the promise of carrying out this defensive function effectively. We in turn defend 'the ecosphere' against externalism by demonstrating that no such strategy for the exploitation of our labor will be tolerated.

Thompson himself points to one way this deeper 'defensive' function is fulfilled when he describes "...the danger that the weapons states will themselves become terrorist, and turn their terror against their own peoples." His description of the Official Secrets Act and its administration by Thatcher's government, considered together with anti-'terrorist' and 'conspiracy' provisions in current attempts to reform the criminal codes in this country -- not to mention the Reagan administration's efforts to expand the brief of the CIA and FBI to include 'domestic intelligence' -- make it clear that the 'danger' is now being realized. The familiar program is to use the supposed imperatives of 'national security' to justify the imposition of 'social discipline' by state police forces; the supposed danger of instant annihilation by Soviet missiles being cited to terrorize populations into accepting as legitimate the authority of rulers who attempt to suppress political dissent and resistance to work, whatever its form, in the name of 'keeping our borders safe.' A clear example of this is the Italian state's need to repress and criminalize all autonomous social movements in order to create a 'safe environment' for the installation of Cruise missiles, so that 'nuclear defense' neatly dovetails into the 'struggle against criminals and terrorists.' But as Thompson has taught us in his vivid descriptions of resistance to the exploitation of industrializing England, social discipline is labor discipline, and the first object of 'social order' is a tame workforce. The voices to be suppressed in the name of national 'security' are first of all those calling for abolition of exploitative institutions, redistribution of wealth, 'more money/less work' -- and this most definitely is a 'class issue.'

A second function of the social systems of war is to provide an unchallengeable basis for absorbing that same wealth, money and work to the point of making all workers totally dependent on their paychecks for survival -- the surest way of all to achieve 'labor discipline.' The threat of nuclear war, which the policies of our political leaders ensure will remain very real and salient, is used to render unquestionable and irresistible all expenditures, however large, made in the name of 'defense.' The point of the policy of cold war is to make military expenditures appear as necessary and as matter of course as every family's expenditures on electricity, food, heat and shelter. Reagan's latest TV speech about the alleged crumbling of the anti-Soviet defenses is an excellent example of this P.R. program of frightening the US population into accepting his decimation of 'social programs.' His object is to absorb so much of the society's surplus that only a pittance is left for the programs which sustain workers independently of the wage -- and to do so, moreover, in the name of 'higher ends' which no one will challenge because to do so is to invite nuclear holocaust. Reagan has made the strategy crudely obvious by combining huge increases in weapons budgets with huge cuts in non-military spending. This too is a 'class issue': GM stockholders do not lose welfare or unemployment checks to pay for Pershing II missiles and B-1 bombers.

This list can go on much further, but it will be enough to cite one more function of the policy of nuclear war, easily overlooked because in a way it is the most fundamental of all. The industries producing nuclear weapons and their enormously sophisticated and expensive delivery systems are extremely efficient accumulators of surplus value produced elsewhere in the economy, given that their one client is the state and their payment is comprised of tax money. In this, defense industries are like the energy industries: they are high technology, capital-intensive industries, with relatively small labor forces (and these comprised largely of 'skilled' labor), hence are little subject to the depredations of dissatisfied workers. And their profits are enormous, again because of their special relationship to the state. They are, in effect, conduits through which the state transfers huge quantities of surplus value produced in other sectors of the economy into the hands of holding companies, multinational corporations, and banks which control and finance weapons development and production. Like the electric bill and the gas bill, everyone has to pay up, whatever the cost, so that raising the rates provides a sure way of extracting value from throughout the society. This is why the movement against nuclear war upsets Reagan's people so thoroughly. It is a direct attack on one of the most efficient instruments of accumulation post-war capitalism has yet been able to devise.



# A Letter to Boston's "Radical Americans" <sup>1</sup>

From a "Loose and Disorderly" New Yorker  
Autumn, 1770



This picture shows THE FATAL FIFTH OF MARCH OF 1770, called the "Boston Massacre." It lies. Its true meaning can be understood only by SAINT PATRICK'S DAY OF 1741. Read on and be enlightened.

TO THE MEMORY OF BOBBY SCOLLARD,

Southie,  
Paddy Duke,  
Hit Man,  
Harvard Cook,  
Soledad Militant,  
Teacher,  
Race Track Schemer,  
No Hair,  
Revolutionary...

Dear Radical Americans of Boston,<sup>2</sup>

Brothers and sisters of Boston, this letter is for you. It is a warning and a reminder. Events are moving fast. The British lion is hungry. We have all heard its roaring. How shall we fight this imperialist beast? How can we stay its unquenchable appetite for our lives, labors and goods? Are we to let the Ruffle-Wearers of our towns lead us to battle against this beast, and when we have defeated it then turn their own hunger against us, to ravage our lives and families under the colors of some American flag instead of the Union Jack? Or, can we defeat them both, the she-lion and her American cubs at the same time?

Even as we try to resolve this question in the practice of our struggles, the political meaning of our efforts is transformed by artful liars in the pay of our own gentry. One Paul Revere, a silversmith, is in the lead of these "historians" of the Ruffle-Wearers. Last week his print arrived in New York, the print describing the "Bloody Massacre" of THE FATAL FIFTH OF MARCH when Captain Preston and some of his bloody-backs shot at our brother workers with their loaded firelocks. On the right his print shows the Captain ordering the red-coats to fire into the crowd that only three paces away had gathered armed with nothing more than snowballs.

We had heard of the massacre. It was the talk of the New York markets and taverns. We knew that the soldiers had come to hassle and mess about with your lives. We knew that the lousy lobster-backs were active in scabbing against the dispute going down in Mr. Grey's rope-yard. We knew of Sam Grey who had advised the soldier who entered the yard looking for work to "go and clean my s--t house." We knew the Irishmen, Patrick Carr and John Clark, who were slain. Of course, we knew the Afro-Indian, Crispus Attucks, who lay dead. How could we not? Since his escape from slavery in Framingham, he'd got around. At six foot two inches, this man, part Natick Indian and part African, cut a pretty prominent figure on our common coast. "The first to defy, the first to die" as your fat man, John Adams, said of him at the trial where that lugubrious crocodile, Adams, defended Preston and his bullies.<sup>3</sup>

Paul Revere is of the fat man's party. True, he does not defend Preston, but he lies as to who was killed. Why does he not show any African faces in the crowd of the victims? Where is Crispus Attucks? We do not pretend to be skilled engravers, but surely a black face is as readily rendered by the engraver's art as a white face which in any case is defined by the blackness around it. And could he not have by some symbolic emblem in the hat or coat - a shamrock would have looked well for instance - have indicated that our brothers, Patrick Carr and John Clark, were Irishmen?<sup>4</sup> Why is it that so swiftly after the massacre we find this print carried throughout the North American dominions obscuring the

essential ethnic combination leading to the first battle of the coming American Revolution?

The answer is that the native lion cubs have well studied what the imperial lion has taught them - DIVIDE AND RULE. The brutality of the English merchants is known around the world, from Bombay to Guinea, from Belfast to Boston. Its appetite for blood and gold is so great that our native "patriots" wish to leech upon us too. The slave traders and task masters of Boston and New York must fight the imperial lion as well as us Irish, Africans, and poor crackers. Though we make all the riches, individually we have nothing. Our only strength is our numbers. Our power is our combination. For fear of that power they lie and conceal our mighty alliance. That accounts for Paul Revere's omissions and distortions.

The importance of this lie, indeed the necessity of it, arose from a fact of our New York history. On SAINT PATRICK'S DAY, 1741, we in New York sought to spice the imperialist dinner with some salt and pepper of our own. Black and white, Irish and African, offered to roast them alive. On that day we set fire to Fort George, the Governor's Mansion, the imperial armory, the symbol of Royal Majesty and Civil Authority, and the haven and security of the rich. We cooked it to a crisp. It was the signal to start fires throughout the town, and the flames of ten fires (eight in six days) was the beacon of general insurrection. We danced in the streets by the light of the conflagration. We drank through the night in the warmth of our just wrath. The flames lit up the sky in billowing bursts of ocher and orange. Their reflections played in the waters of the harbor. The world seemed to turn upside down. Irish were to be governors, Africans to be kings.

I wish to recollect 1741 for you, Radical Americans, though it was thirty years ago. I am a "loose and disorderly person." I belong to the "scum and dregs of the white complexion." When your fat man, John Adams, referred to the victims of THE FATAL FIFTH OF MARCH as the "most obscure and inconsiderable that could have been found upon the continent," the brave words belong to me! Therefore you may dismiss what I say, or doubt its veracity, or question the faltering memory of an old and indigent man. As you ought. Consequently, I'll tell the story only by reference to what has been printed. You can check everything I say in the book that was printed of the trials.<sup>5</sup> (The trials were long, my friends, beginning in the violent spring and stretching throughout the hot summer of 1741 and beyond. Small wonder they were long, for long was the trail of blood that followed them, long were the clouds of smoke that rose above the city from the burning of our brothers and sisters, long was the voyage of those transported to the West Indies, long was the time that the leaders hung in gibbets on the docks.) The trial proceedings omit

to record the words of defense, only the confessions that were extracted from the miserable wretches who would sell out their brothers and sisters to save their own lives were published in the proceedings. Nevertheless, I shall refer only to what was printed, and leave the rest to your experienced imagination that can easily piece together the fragments. Or better, you can investigate it yourself by asking questions at the taverns, rope-walks, wharfs, and timber-yards of your own city where surely you'll find veterans of SAINT PATRICK'S DAY of 1741.

Thirteen black men and women were burned at the stake in the evenings between May and August. Sixteen black men and women were hanged during the the same period, except in the mornings. Four whites were hanged. Seven whites and seventy Africans were transported out of the King's North American dominions to be sold into slavery in Newfoundland and the Caribbean. Extraordinary marvels took place at these scenes of terror and English law. I shall tell you of them presently. For now, let me lead you into the circumstances of the revolt and guide you to the inner-most places where we brooded and planned our conspiracy.

Do you remember the coldness of the winter of 1740/41? Oh, it was the worst of the century! All over Europe, as we later learned, people rioted for food. In Ireland Bishop Berkeley reported seeing the carcasses of children frozen solid in the lanes, and haggard women fighting one another for the privilege of gnawing on dog's bones. In New York it was very bad too. Provisions were low and the market was bare. Diana, a slave to Mrs. Marchado, laid her child on the ground to spite her mistress. There the simple creature was frozen to



death. John Hughson, considered by many to be the leader of the rebellion, was far more often that winter away from home with his sleigh collecting firewood from the fields and commons. His neighbor and brother tradesman, John Romme, likewise took particular care that winter to get in his firewood. Two Africans, Caesar and Cuffee, and a white lad named Yorkshire made regular deliveries for him. Antonio, one of the Spanish prisoners of war unjustly sold as slaves, walked into town on an errand for his master, and froze his feet in the first snow. By spring he was permanently lame. And if the winter were not bad enough, the horrors of war added to the fears of our town, bringing death and desperation to the poor and deluding hysteria and uncertainty of trade to the ruffled rich.

A year earlier that merchant mountebank, Robert Jenkins, fooled around in Parliament flourishing his severed ear in front of the astonished bigwigs, pretending that Spanish papish predators had sliced it off in unprovoked battle. Yet, we knew from word arriving through Mexico and El Salvador that the London merchants had already instigated trouble among the long-cutters of Honduras and the sailors of the slave fleets (asiento vessels, so-called because the English possessed a monopoly on slave trading to the Spanish Main.)

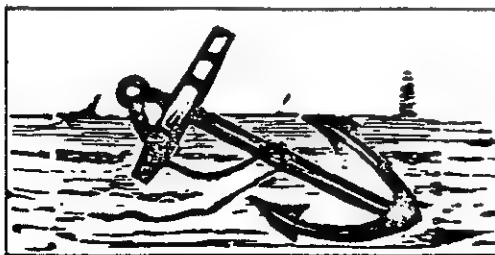
In New York the effects of war were already felt. Captain Lush in March of 1741 had captured (or stolen!) a Spanish frigate. Nineteen of her crew were Spanish-speaking Africans. They were imprisoned. A Court of Admiralty ruled them all slaves. The Vendue-Master at their auction said that the proceedings were warranted because he had heard from a ship's captain who had heard that some of the crew were heard to have been slaves once in Carthage<sup>6</sup>. Lush profited heavily from the transaction, though he risked the wrath of the Spaniards who promised to burn his house down and even dared to threaten to "tie him to a beam and roast him like a piece of beef."<sup>7</sup>

Though they insisted that they were not slaves - they did have surnames which they duly produced in court - they refused to stand aloof from those who still were. Later these Spaniards were an example of courage and teachers of soldiering technique to those of us less experienced. Antonio, for instance, "had something black, which he said was to throw on houses to set them on fire." He cut this "something" into pieces and distributed them at Hughson's. The slave Ben answered Jack's doubts about the



conspiracy saying, "Oh! you fool, those Spaniards know better than York Negroes, and could help better to take it than they, because they were more used to war."

In the autumn of 1740 an expeditionary fleet against the Spanish West Indies was raised in New York. This alone dangerously depleted provisions against the coming winter. John Hughson and his African associates were pretty sharp in this situation - selling a man-of-war fourteen or fifteen firkins of butter that they had somehow obtained. John Comfort carefully watched to whom the water from his well went. All manner of poor men and boys were pressed in the streets to man this fleet. So few were the young and able-bodied left, that Albany (Mr. Carpenter's slave) "believed an hundred and fifty men might take this city."<sup>8</sup> After the departure of the "Cuba men" only the indirect effects of the war touched our city - shortages and hysteria.



The latter we saw in the spring of 1741 in Governor Oglethorpe's letter. Freshly returned from his slaughters in the Florida campaign, he wrote the governor of New York from Georgia saying that all kinds of Spanish priests had infiltrated the northern ports disguising themselves as physicians, dancing-masters, and school-teachers. This was a premature Red-Under-the-Bed theory. To an extent it worked: the wartime delusory paranoia helped hang many of the people here, including that good and learned man, John Ury. Us slaves, "scum," and "dregs" needed no such outside interference from mysterious plotters, though we were grateful for whatever help we could get. What we wanted was an attack by sea on our city: if the European imperialists were at each others throats we could supply the coup de grace from within.

Preparation for the insurrection of SAINT PATRICK'S DAY, 1741, had begun months in advance. The Spanish POWs and the War of Jenkin's Ear both played a part that Bastian, a slave, summed up in this way: "they had a parcel of good hands, Spanish Negroes, five or six of them who could join with the York Negroes: that they expected that war would be proclaimed in a little time against the French, and that the French and the Spaniards would come here." Their expectations were disappointed. However, other problems were resolved. In forming a coalition of African slaves, Irish servants, free Negroes, Afro-Hispanics, native Americans, and some discontented white

soldiers of uncertain progeny, in the repressive atmosphere of a Calvinist, merchant city, we were able to overcome some important problems of command, weaponry, ideology, and communications.

## Command

At the trial some of the characteristics of the command structure emerged. The city was divided in two parts: the east and west, with John Romme's house being the headquarters of the "Fly Boys" in the east, and John Hughson's house the headquarters of the "Long Bridge Boys" of the west. Each had their captains and was further subdivided into companies. Juan was to be a captain, same with Jack. Ben and Toby also were appointed captains, assuming their masters' names as Captain Marshall and Captain Provoost. Around Christmas time about forty Negroes of Long Island formed themselves into a company, mustered out on Sunday afternoons, and trained themselves in the use of "borrowed" arms. Indeed, back in 1740 word of the plot had spread into the country around New York. In Westchester it was heard that "there would be bloody times in York before harvest." A slave in Long Island was heard saying, "if they burn their backsides, they must sit down on the blisters, but said further, let them go and prosper."<sup>9</sup>

Though he denied that he could read and write, Ben, who also had access to his master's horse and weapons on account of his master's frequent absences, kept a list whereupon all the conspirators affixed their marks against their names that he had written out. Those who worked the hardest and took the most risks also took the grandest titles. Thus, Caesar was to be the governor. Hughson the King. And Peg, "The Newfoundland Irish Beauty" was to become the Governess.



## Weaponry

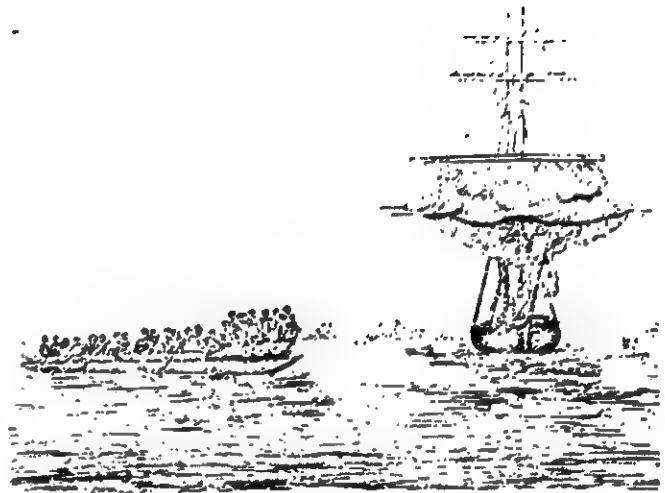
Weapons were stockpiled all that winter. Hughson collected money from his African comrades (who'd reappropriated it from their masters) to buy arms and ammunition in New Jersey. The Spaniards offered technical advice in the manual exercise of arms. Powlus, one of them, sold nine knives at the meal-market for 2s. 6d. We knew something about detonators and explosives too. When it came to pyrotechnics, none knew more than "Doc" Harry, an African living in Nassau, Long Island, since his expulsion by the New York magistracy for what they were pleased to call "mal-practice in physic"! "Doc" Harry understood that poisonous, therapeutic, and explosive properties of substances, knowledge that he had begun to study in his native Guinea.

Once after a supper meeting at Hughson's he cried out, "Murrah for Guanas boys, for he had Guanas boys enough." Guano, as some of you Boston radical Americans must know, is the excrement of bats and birds. Those of you who have sailed on the Peruvian coast or around the off-shore islands of Florida's Gulf coast, will have seen huge mounds of it and the cliffs covered with it, like icing on a cake. "Doc" Harry had learned how to make gunpowder from this, and other explosive forms. Much later, on board the ship that transported him to Hispaniola, Bastian remembered, "We had combustibles prepared by doctor Harry, made up into balls." Several of the many fires that broke out after SAINT PATRICK'S DAY were ignited by his preparations, though it was a smoldering hickory or walnut fire-brand (such hardwoods can keep an ember alive for twenty-four hours with the minimum of oxygen) that Quaco had actually used to ignite Fort George that day.

## Ideas

The ideas that propelled so many to such desperate action were not given a full hearing at the trials, because the justices were less interested in what we had to say, than they were in pretending that we were all the stupid agents of the Pope. However, sometimes a few words would slip in, and I can safely leave it to you to read between the lines and to choose for yourself any among the many communitarian traditions alive in our century that they belonged to.

The white soldiers wanted money. It was as simple as that. They had not been paid in months, and when they were paid it hardly satisfied their wants.<sup>10</sup> The Irish soldier, Kane, born in Co. Athlone, told Johnson, the journeyman hatter, "D--n ye, don't be down-hearted, never fear, for we shall have money enough by-and-by." Hughson used to say "the country was not good, too many gentlemen here, and made negroes work hard." The Newfoundland Irish Beauty remembered him telling Cuffee, an African leader,



"they should steal all that they could from their masters: then he would carry them to a strange country, and give them their liberty, and set them free."

My! my! my! did those Dutch and English property people in the jury hate old Hughson! He was guilty "not only of making negro slaves their equals, but even their superiors, by waiting upon, keeping with, and entertaining them with meat, drink, and lodging." Equality might have been the watchword of the insurrection. Quak "said he would ride in a coach after he had destroyed his master." Cuffee used to say, "that a great many people had too much, and others too little; that his old master had a great deal of money, but that, in a short time, he should have less, and that he (Cuffee) would have more."

Equality and freedom. Cato complained "it was hard a case upon the poor Negroes, that they could not so much as take a walk after church-out, but the constables took them up; therefore in order to be free, they must set the houses on fire, and kill the white people." Caesar recruited Bastian to the insurrectionary preparations with the single question, "Whether he would join along with them to become their own masters?"

We also had amongst us veterans of other rebellions, some old-timers (long departed to their reward) who remembered in New York the Rebellion of 1712, and some recent arrivals who had participated in the St. John's plot, and the Antigua Rebellion of 1736. Referring to the latter, Cataline was overheard in his master's yard saying, "the negroes were fools to do here as they had done in the hot country; for they all burnt and hanged for it in the hot country." Will, a slave to Mr. Ward, the clock-maker, was an embittered veteran of the Antigua Rebellion. He'd been a leader of the plot and later turned King's Evidence to save his skin which is why he had to flee that island for New York, and it accounts for his sullen bitterness.



He used to complain "that the Negroes here were cowards; for that they had no hearts as those at Antigua." Poor Will! He'd betrayed his people once, but he made up for it in New York (if you want my opinion!). He taught us how to construct a dark lantern, so we could meet and see each other at night without attracting notice from our masters who had forbidden the use of candles. Will was burnt at the stake on July 4, 1741.

Do any of you people remember Robert Barrow? He used to go by the names "Runwell" and "Barbadoes" too. The guy hanged in London in 1737. He sailed in Guinea, Virginia, and Barbadoes. He deserted the first slaver he sailed on and lived with a maroon colony of runaways in Antigua, news of whose rebellion he carried back to London whence perhaps it reached you.<sup>11</sup>

## Communication

Our most difficult problem was communication. A place of communication was one problem. Means of communication was another, and no less serious.

The Africans were from several different nations and spoke as many languages. You wouldn't know this from their names which either suggested that they were Latin speakers (Caesar, Cataline, Cato, Pompeii, Mars, Primus) or that they spoke some dialect of English (Cork, Dundee, Worcester, Sussex, Deptford, Scotland, Hanover, Windsor). Only a very few retained an African name (Sambo, Cuffee, Quaco, Quamino), or were known by new American names like the two fiddlers, Braveboy and Curacao Dick. A new Afro-American lingo helped us. Jack, the cooper, spoke a "dialect so perfectly Negro and unintelligible" that the court had to get an interpreter. When "backarara" was uttered, the white people in the juror's box and on the judges seat didn't know it was of them we were speaking!

Then, there were the Irish among us who spoke English or Gaelic. Hughson and Romme spoke either English or Dutch. The Spanish POWs spoke the language of Spain (what else?). Bastian spoke French. Wan spoke in a native American tongue. Campbell and Ury understood Latin and Greek. We were an international, polyglot community. Curacao Dick could talk some Spanish. Antonio some English. Emmanuel, the sail-maker, understood English and Spanish. Sawney also spoke these tongues, plus "some other language" that Mary Burton (the Judas whose confession was fullest) did not understand.

What brought us together in communication was music, food, and booze. The fiddle was the most important Irish contribution, every bit as important to understanding as guano was to our problem of munitions. Jamaica was an exciting fiddler: he said that he'd play over the masters "while they were roasting in the flames; and said he had been slave long enough." When we all met at Hughson's it was the fiddle that got



the blood stirring and the feet moving. Once Cuffee played away on his fiddle after supper. Another time "Ben played on the fiddle" while "Hughson's wife and daughter danced together in one part of the room, and the negroes in another."<sup>12</sup> After a meeting upstairs, Hughson and others came down and found two Negro men afiddling to them ...one fiddler belonged to Holt, named Joe, the other Kierstead's Braveboy."

In the summer of 1740 the slaves met in "Bowrey-land" at a frolic organized by the free Negroes. Curacao Dick fiddled so well that Sussex paid him two Dutch dollars. At the same frolic Braveboy was introduced to the plans of insurrection: "they were going to have a small fight, and if he would be on their side he should lose by it, and that they would have him, because he was a fiddler."

I don't know what tunes they played, though "Fire on the Mountain" and "The Coloured Aristocracy" are still popular. Perhaps they hacked away at some of those beautiful but tricky compositions of Carolan's that had recently been introduced to our shores by some sailors who had heard the great bard's creations before he died in Ireland in 1738. In any case this "music of the devil" got people together in a way that we understood each other despite all our languages. The slave masters' policy of creating a Babel of discord among us, their servants and slaves, was overcome by a little fiddling, and quite a lot of eating and drinking.

The drinking was illegal. An Act of the New York Assembly forbade the serving of drinks to Negroes, and in the spring of 1741 the jury presented more than a dozen "disorderly houses," ordering the constables to close them down, for nothing more than serving a dram now and then. It was in the summer of 1740 that Admiral Vernon (who always appeared on deck in a grogham cloak) ordered that the rum measured out daily to the sailors be mixed with water. Thenceforth, Jack Tar was not quite as jolly as he used to be, subsisting on "grog."

But for us on shore, it was only the best. Rum made many a fine brew. Egg punch was a favorite. "Flip" was easily made with sugar and water. Caesar and Cuffee having robbed the cellar of a tavern back in 1735, decided to commemorate the occasion by forming the "Geneva Club," to drink the



An Irish feast

juniper-flavored alcohol, a Dutch contribution to civilization and the drink of mortal desperation of the London poor.<sup>13</sup>

The club had the "impudence to assume the style and title of Free Masons, in imitation of a society here: which was looked upon to be a gross affront to the provincial grand master and gentlemen of the fraternity at that time..." Ha! Ha! Ha!

Most of the eating and drinking was done at John Hughson's waterside establishment. A word needs to be said about this extraordinary man and his family. His brother was a boatman. His mother-in-law was a fortune-teller. His daughter perhaps the most stalwart of all the conspirators. And his wife as grand a helpmeet as any army might desire. Hughson himself was a shoemaker, a son of St. Crispin, so he knew the callouses and corns as well as the soles of the many people who visited his house, especially on Sunday afternoons, when a great many country Negroes and whites came into town.

His place was reputed to be, and surely was, a receiver's ken. A Negro butcher supplied him with meat, and his many country friends kept his larder well-stocked with game. In that very hard year his generosity was appreciated by hundreds of folks who could find upon the planks put on top a pair of tubs, a banquet of food and fellowship. A Peculiarity of these meals was frequently noted in the proceedings of the trial. But, whether it was peculiarity of the meals or of the court reporter's imagination, is something that you can judge as well as I.

The fact is, that the printed proceedings of evidence on the life and death of one hundred forty men and women notes more than a dozen times that everyone ate on a table cloth! Strange, eh? Here are some excerpts from the court proceedings that I include just to show you what I mean:

1) "Hughson took a flask of rum out of a case and set it on the table, and two bowls of punch were made; some drank dram; a cloth was laid."

2) "...two or three tables were put together to make it longer; Hughson's daughter brought in the victuals, and just as he came in Sarah brought the cloth and laid it."

3) "...came there about four in the afternoon; a great many Negroes there, about thirteen or fourteen; the daughter alid the cloth after he came in."

4) "That some time after Christmas he was at the house of John Hughson, and that there was a supper there...the cloth being laid and taken away by Margaret Kerry..."

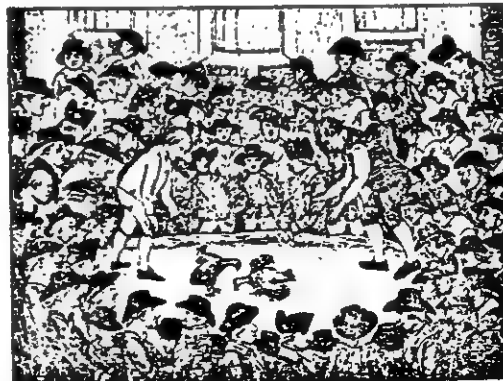
What they were trying to get at is evidence of "papal practices." To the severe Calvinist burghers of New York, a simple table cloth seemed to be akin to the pall, paten, purificator, frontal cloth, cere cloth, and fair linen of High Church ceremony. So what? even if it was. Sarah and The Newfoundland Irish Beauty, though reputed to be papists, only intended to prepare a clean surface to eat from, so that people could be comfortable. Sure, it did bring people together. While there certainly was a communal aspect to the meetings, this was not Holy Communion! And while for many this was their last (good) supper, the meal was a far cry from Mass!

Hughson's was a meeting place. There the oaths were sworn in preparation for SAINT PATRICK'S DAY. Some kissed the Bible. Some swore by thunder. Some took off their left shoe and placed their toes in a charcoal ring described on the floor. Once Ury stood in the middle of the ring, a crucifix in his hand, and commented on the meaning of the 117th Psalm:

O praise the LORD, all ye nations:  
praise him all ye people.

Hughson's house had many rooms and room for many beliefs - African, Catholic, Antinomian, and whatever else a man or woman might think. The place was often called "Oswego" in honor of the Iroquois traders with whom Hughson had once lived. Some of these, like "Indian Wan," brought their religion to the place.<sup>14</sup> Hughson's "Oswego" was for all ye nations, all ye people, as Ury expounded.<sup>15</sup>

There weren't many other places to meet. Shipboard, woodlots, the commons, the meal market, the "Bowery-land:" that was about it, except for Gerardus Comfort's water-well and Crocker's cock pit. At those places business could be done without Roosevelt,



Schuyler, De Peyster, Keteltass, or Van Zant overhearing. Everyday slaves were sent to fetch tea water and tote it back in kegs. Jack, Dundee, Daeser, Brash, and Ticklepitcher first heard of the plans at the well. In fact, so great was the hysteria of the summer of 1741 that just to have been seen pumping water was evidence of conspiracy! "Cato went to the pump to wash his hands, and Fortune pumped the water for him." Fortune was hanged on this kind of evidence! The pump was especially busy in the autumn when the West India fleet was being fitted out and supplied.

The other place of meeting, free of the barking of masters and the cowering of slaves, was at Crocker's cock pit. Cuffee lost a Spanish doubloon there in a bad bet. Hughson and Campbell, a Greek and Latin teacher, had met there since at least 1738, playing chequers and "discoursing." The man, Ury, who'd come up from Philadelphia and the two "Dublins" in upper and lower Pennsylvania, lived at the fighting cocks. There he baptised the son of John Ryan, an Irish servant brought over the previous summer. There he impressed a gambling house carpenter with his fine reading voice of Latin and Greek. There he set up school for a few young scholars. There he sat up at night discoursing on Wesley's and Whitefield's doctrines of salvation. (How he scorned their bleating!)

It was there too that he made his famous reply to Mary Burton, a reply that soon was the talk of the commons and the water-pump:

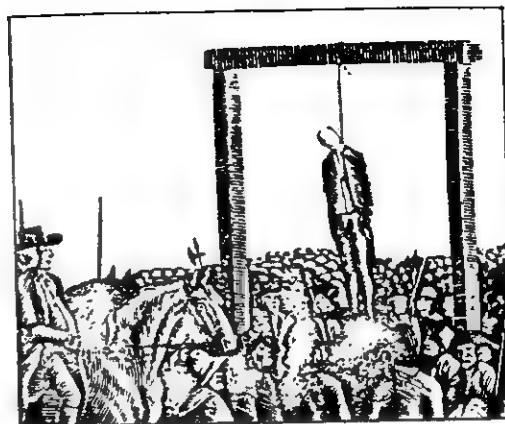
She wished those black foals at the devil.  
Oh, said Ury, let them be black, or what they will, the devil has nothing to do with them; I can forgive them their sins, and you yours too.

Respectacle and hardly reaching five feet in height, his soul was great and his generosity of spirit knew no bounds. It was said that he was a Nonjuring priest. In England he'd been banished for treasonous publications. The son of the secretary of the South Sea Company, the slave trading syndicate for the asiento, he preserved his gentle faith on a simple cupboard altar for his book and candle at Hughson's, and preached his words to the slaveys whose labors had provided his Dad with a foul livelihood.

Before he was topped off at the August hanging, he cried out, "Am I prepared to meet my Lord when the midnight cry is echoed forth? shall I then have the wedding garment on?" Many people there thought that never was there a handsomer spirit, and the same spectators, perhaps moved by his eloquence, prepared midnight curses for his executioners.

Oh, dear Radical Americans of Boston! My heart is heavy with the remembrance of the fine men and women who were lost to us in the hangings, the burnings, and the

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transportations of 1741. John Romme, the shoemaker, with a memory of the Rebellion of 1712. Cuffee, intrepid and expert hunter of pheasant and rabbit. Othello, the Chief Justice's slave, who carried our news to Rhode Island. Jack the cooper. Ben, the mariner, who read to us aloud. Scipio, a cooper, and another reader. Galloway, who promised to make us all a new paid of leather breeches with victory. Quack whose wife was the governor's cook and got him into the fort for the SAINT PATRICK'S DAY firing. Jack, the tallow-chandler. Coffin, the pedlar. Holt, the dancing master. Corker, who tended the Governor's stables. Connolly, a priest on Governor's Island. Luke Barrington who refused to drink to King George. Kane and Kelly and fifteen bloody backs ready to turn their coats inside out.

Sarah Hughson saw her parents "loll out their tongues at the company." She derived courage from their silence at the hanging and, boy! did she need it. She had to endure more than half a dozen sentences of execution, each followed by His Majesty's Most Gracious respite. Thus the King toyed with her life in a feeble attempt to induce her to a full confession. Just as a cat will play with a mouse before sinking its teeth into the throat of the little creature.

Then, there was the fabulous Newfoundland Irish Beauty, also known as Margaret Soubiero, a.k.a. Sheila McMullin, a.k.a. Salingburgh, a.k.a. Kerry, a.k.a. Salinburr. Peg.

In the autumn of 1740 she took lodgings with Frank, a free Negroe. In February, 1741, she moved into Hughson's house. She laid the cloth, brothers and sisters, yes she did. To see her beauty, her grace, her independence, her fight, her revolutionary loyalty and love for Cuffee, the African hunter and leader of men, was to see the future; for she was the first - even before the drink, the splendid meals, the hot music had brought us together - to show us all that Irish and African could love and struggle together. In the winter of 1740 she showed us the shape and form of things to come. She bore a child, and the child lived. Anne Kannady

was the town gossip, and married to a peruke-maker, as you might expect. She fussed and fretted, needled and goaded, until she learned the color of the baby. Ha! This baby, the child of an Irish and African union, was a new creature, the American product of the "scum and dregs of this earth," showing the world a new face of humanity. (For its color, see page 443.)

Peg was launched into eternity on 12 June 1741. Do not forget her, Radical Americans, remember her as you remember Crispus Attucks and Patrick Carr during your grand orations on THE FATAL FIFTH OF MARCH.

Our revolution of SAINT PATRICK'S DAY, 1741, failed. It is only remembered, if at all, as a "plot or conspiracy." The "patriots" of your town, from John Adams to Paul Revere, your tea-drinking, free-trading "mohawks," in their strutting bourgeois indignation, may have forgotten their names but not their deeds. That is why they acted quickly, and in contradictory fashion, after the Boston Massacre. Why? What do they have to fear from an Irish-African combination? I think that you know as well as I. You have seen them wince as they button their pants and hear the harlot's curse. You have seen their porcelain tea cup shake for a moment in the porcelain saucer when they note that the servant has some fingers missing. You have seen them spill their wig-powder when in the mirror appears in the background a pock-marked old man. You have seen them trip ever so slightly at the sight of a gasping man in the ship's hold. Where is their revolutionary talk and their brave bombast when the winter freezes the rag-covered feet of the women gathering kindling from the commons? What frightened them about New York 1741 was the puissance of our combination. To them a few timbers burning on a cold winter's night or the prospect of the Governor's bricks a-tumbling down were palpable indications of the transience of their rule. That is why your John Adams defended Captain Preston and his gang of assassins. Crispus Attucks and Patrick Carr were ready to "plunder the King's Chest" in the Boston Customs House.<sup>16</sup> Revolutionary hypocrits.

Friends, I have asked your indulgence to recollect our history and I have taxed it as heavily as the King of England has taxed our newspapers. Our words, since his taxes, are now expensive. We cannot afford the time or the money to analyze our history in the detail and with the depth that it deserves. Allow me, therefore, to bring this narrative to a conclusion, by begging your indulgence once more to report to you a thing which many of those who saw it "were ready to resolve...into miracles." For is not the miracle the simplest way of summing up the contradictions of struggle and passing them on to future generations?

Noise of strange happenings began on 12 June when the Sheriffs brought Hughson out of jail to be carried to his execution. It was observed that on each of his cheeks a red mark, about the size of a shilling, had appeared. In one who was normally of a pale visage, this was remarkable, and many interpreted it as a sign of innocence. Personally, I thought that, if any thing, it was a sign to others to avenge the treatment he must have received in jail. Be that as it may, the tendency to prophetic prognostications began then. Even a year later in Charles Town, South Carolina, the negroes were still making "pretended prophecies."

After Hughson's agonies were completed and his body hung limp and heavy as a sack of potatoes, the Sheriffs' officers cut it down and stuffed his carcass into an iron gibbet to hang on the waterfront as a 'teaching aid' (as we might say) to our city's visitors. A week passed. The flies began to gather. Another week passed. The sun grew hotter. During the third week of that July, the slave, York, was brought down to the wharf to be hung in the "Sheriff's Picture Frame," next to Hughson. Then, an extraordinary appearance was recorded, for it was observed that

so much of him as was visible, viz. - face, hands, neck, and feet, were of a deep shining black, rather blacker than the negro placed by him, who was one of the darkest hue of his kind; and the hair of Hughson's beard and neck (his head could not be seen for he had a cap on) was curling like the wool of a negroe's beard and head, and the features of his face were of the symmetry of a negro beauty; the nose broad and flat, the nostrils open and extended, the mouth wide, lips full and thick.<sup>17</sup>

Meanwhile, Caesar, whose carcass had been gibbeted a month earlier than Hughson's was found to have been so thoroughly bleached - by what forces of sun, wind, salt, air or otherwise, I know not - that he had turned whitish.

That a white man became black and a black man white were accounted "wondrous phenomena." People flocked from all points of the compass to witness these "miracles." Why or how these transpigmentations took place is a matter perhaps best left to the speculation of the learned scholars of your academies, though, for my part, I can't help but think that there be others in Dorchester, and Roxbury whose speculations might enlighten us all, especially if they were expressed in practice.



## Footnotes

1. Despite doubts about the authenticity of this letter, we in Midnight Notes publish it because it raises issues about the racism of the Boston working-class, or, rather, of the racism imposed by the Boston Brahmins upon the working-class, that are rarely aired elsewhere. We have decided to leave the text unaltered, so that those skilled in textual exegesis may submit it to the most rigorous analysis. Instead, our editors have added footnotes bringing the reader's attention to authenticated commentaries of confirmation of the extraordinary events that the letter discloses.

2. Of course, the author of this letter could not intend an allusion to the magazine called Radical America which began publication in Boston two hundred years after this letter was apparently was written. Nor is it surprising that the law-abiding and peaceful editors of that magazine have not written about the subject of this letter, inasmuch as anything having to do with treason and plot has been forbidden by the current F.B.I. directives. Yet, the only thing that will unite a cotton-picker and a 'tater-digger is action against a common enemy, something possible in 1741 and 1770, if not 1983.

3. The story of the Boston Massacre (5 March 1770) has often been told, both in bombastic orations of commemoration and in skilled scholarly works. Among the latter we recommend two accounts which do not conceal the ethnic alliance within the working-class struggle that led to it. Richard B. Morris, Government and Labor in Early America (1946), pp. 190 et seq., and Dirk Hoerder, "Boston Leaders and Boston Crowds, 1765-1776," in Alfred F. Young (ed.), The American Revolution: Explorations in the History of American Radicalism (1976)

4. It may be thought anachronistic that the author of this letter refers to the victims of the Boston Massacre as his "brothers," since there were clearly no ties of consanguinity between them nor evidences of our modern class consciousness. Yet, that was the designation used by the men of 1741 to refer to those knowledgeable of the conspiracy.

5. He refers to A Journal of the proceedings in the Detection of the Conspiracy formed by Some White People in Conjunction with Negro and other Slaves, that was printed in New York and London in 1744. It was republished in 1810 and once again in 1971 with an excellent introduction by Thomas J. Davis, in a volume entitled The New York Conspiracy. Subsequent page references are to this modern edition published by Beacon Press.

6. In Venezuela.

7. Page 179.

8. Page 259.

9. Page 386.

10. As editors we have been disappointed to have found so few studies among our colleagues in English, Irish, African, and American history that study the actual material relations of the 18th century soldiery. We were fortunate however to come across a remarkable Ph. D. dissertation at the University of Pennsylvania about 18th century sailors: Marcus Rediker, "Society and Culture Among Anglo-American Deep Sea Sailors, 1700-1750" (1982).

11. We have confirmed this information in The Ordinary of Newgate's Account of the Malefactors Executed at Tyburn, 5 October 1737.

12. Bobby Scollard said, "We got to figure this out, baby, we're wasting us and not them. And as one Black dude said to me, 'Hey, lookit, we don't have to love each other, but we've got to treat each other as human beings. We've got to have respect for each other, but that doesn't mean you have to kiss me and I have to kiss you. We just got to make it.'" NEPA NEWS: The Voice of the North East Prisoners Association, III 4 (April-May, 1975).

13. M. Dorothy George, London Life in the Eighteenth Century (1925), describes the toll on human life that this brew took during the "Gin Decade" of the 1730s.

14. We have searched the records of the trial repeatedly, and have found no evidence for this statement. "Indian Wan," it's true, was a conspirator who often met at Hughson's, but there's no evidence that he shared his wisdom with the others, nor that he didn't.

15. Also unjustified by the evidence, strictly interpreted.

16. Captain Preston published his account of March 5 in the Public Advertiser in 28 April 1779. Do you wish that the author of this letter had as deep an appreciation of the weakness of 18th century working-class forces as the historian Gene ("hegemony") Genovese evinces?

17. Pages 273-276.

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**RADICAL AMERICA** is an independent socialist-feminist journal, featuring the history and current developments in the working class, the role of women and Third World people, with reports on shop-floor and community organizing, the history and politics of radicalism and feminism, and debates on current socialist theory and popular culture.

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# In the House of the Killer Bats

This interview took place in early 1983, during a period of extreme repression of the Guatemalan resistance. The massacres, mutilations, executions and torture, under the direction of Rios Montt, are so well known that even the European Parliament has taken a formal position against him and the military support the US government is supplying -- openly and covertly.

The Guatemalan resistance is frequently characterized as a new Reformation crisis pitting "liberation theology" Catholics against fundamentalist Protestants. At other times it is taken as the battle of the armed Left revolution against Right-wing reaction. But the entrance of the Mayan Indian population into the resistance recently has changed all this. It now must be seen in the tradition of the continent-wide, centuries-old struggle of Amerindians against capital.

The Mayan people's minds stretch back to the pre-Columbian world as Rigoberta's reference to the Popul Vuh, the "bible" of the Quiche Maya, implies. Indeed, she might have been thinking of the story of "The Two Heroes and the Rebellious Daughter" (told at the end of the interview). But they confront international capital, so she and the others reflect a contemporary, planetary sense that we would be wise to share. Can we remain spectators to the game capital plays in Guatemala given that the guns come from Reagan and the Congress, the money from Jerry Falwell and the electronic preachers, and the torturers from training camps located at such "All-American" addresses as S.W. 40th Street and 158th Ave or N.W. 58th Street and 102nd Ave in Dade County, Florida?



## Guatemala, 1983



MN: Why don't you start by telling us who you are, where you come from, and why you are here in the U.S.

Rigoberta Menchu: I am from the northern part of the province of Quiche in Guatemala. I am a Quiche Indian and I speak the Quiche language. It is with great pain that I must also say that I was made an orphan by the repression in my country; that is, my parents were assassinated - burned alive along with the rest of my family. I am not sure whether or not any of my family is still alive, but they are part of the people that is suffering.

Efrain Rosales: I am from the village of La Estancia which is four kilometers from the town of Santa Cruz de Quiche. I too am an Indian: a campesino and a weaver. I also left Guatemala suffering persecution by the government, by death squads. I too suffered due to the assassinations, tortures and kidnappings of many of my people specifically: a member of my family, neighbors, relatives, friends, and leaders of the different organizations in my village. Many of my people of Quiche have been tortured and murdered. For these reasons and because I myself survived one of the massacres, I left Guatemala after the coup d'etat of Rios Montt.

Ricardo Falla: I am a Jesuit priest. I am a Guatemalan, born in Guatemala and an anthropologist. I have now been outside of Guatemala for three years.

The reason I left, together with other priests, was to help out in Nicaragua where

the people had just begun the process of insurrection leading to the final triumph. We believed it was important to help, in many ways. But since then the situation has become worse in Guatemala and I have not been able to return to my country.

Rigoberta: For your information, I also left Guatemala to fulfill a specific task. I am representing the Guatemalan Committee of Patriotic Unity. This is the political organization which represents the struggle of our people at all levels. We are working to establish relationships with governments and political parties. At the same time our task is to expose and denounce internationally what is happening in our country.

Efrain: I too am carrying out a specific task. In Guatemala the government has censored all of the media. Now this is not something new, for my people have never had access to the media. However, today things are worse with the censorship of the press/media by the Rios Mont government. We know perfectly well that here in the U.S. the people don't know what is happening in Guatemala. Human rights organizations and some journalists who are trying to expose what is going on in Guatemala are always trying to get news reports out. However, these reports do not reach the U.S. (in their original form). The international news organizations shorten, change and distort them.

Thus it is important, and our Christian duty, to expose and not be quiet about what is happening in Guatemala... there are massacres, tortures, and kidnappings occurring all the time. The

children suffer, the women suffer, the old people suffer. And now the government is carrying out their scorched earth policy as well as a policy of "strategic hamlets." To date approximately one hundred and fifty villages have been massacred in Guatemala. Thus we can't be quiet. We find it necessary to tell the world and at the same time request help from the American people. For in this trip we need to touch your hearts so you will come to realize what is happening in Guatemala: that people are starving and sick...that tears and blood are running in the streets, of Guatemala. Given this we ask the North American people to pressure their government to stop/cut off all the military aid that is going to Guatemala - that is to say helicopter parts and military advisors which are being used to massacre my people.

MN: It is quite clear to us that your people (Guatemala Indians), have been able to defend your culture over many centuries in the face of enormous difficulties. Could you address this issue?

Rigoberta: To begin with, it's true that in Guatemala we have a rich history and there are rich elements in our culture today. However, since the beginning (the Spanish invasion), there has always been a struggle to destroy our culture, to impose on us a foreign system, so corrupt... so individualistic. However, we have resisted from the beginning. Our grandparents tell us that they were almost slaves, that the landowners did not pay them even a cent that they did the work of horses for the rich. When it was clear that we wouldn't do it anymore, we started organizing ourselves, they came in with demagoguery making many promises, especially concerning land. And my people love the land. It must be said we love the land, we live on it and it is important to understand that our culture is based on it.

So it must be said that the rebellion of the Indians did not begin today or in the 1970's or 60's. History tells us that there have been many rebellions by the Indians. We have had to struggle together. However the enemy with his sophisticated apparatus has tried to smother these struggles, to choke them. And so it is important to realize that once again we are being threatened with extermination. The hatred of the Guatemalan regime for the Indian is very serious, very great. Why? Because this is another period of direct war between government and Indian. The rebellion now is not only of protest but of concrete struggle.

The Popul Vuh, the sacred book of the Quiche Maya speaks of struggle and resistance to oppression. Now we are practicing this philosophy in our struggle, which terrifies our enemy, leaving them no other alternative than to raise arms against my people who are in the majority.

We know very well that the struggle of our people will never be extinguished even with threats, bullets and blood.

Efrain: Yes, death is a danger for us. Our  
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culture is threatened. It is most important to stress this to the peoples of the world, the governments, the political parties, and the humanitarian institutions. Often we hear in the mass media that a species of animal is going extinct. People are very concerned. Yet, when a culture and a people are in danger, it is difficult to get governments and political parties to do anything. In our situation it is also difficult for the mass media to say what is happening.

This struggle is not only the struggle of the Indian or of the Ladino who speaks Spanish. It is everyone's struggle (in Guatemala). Why? Because we understand very well that if we are divided...the enemy is better able to defeat us. However, as an Indian I have to say that we have the political consciousness and the determination to struggle and we have clear objectives. Someday soon it will be our responsibility to take positions of power in our country and we will be ready.

Rigoberta: And so we reaffirm that we respect our identity as Indian people and are struggling to force others to do the same. It doesn't help me if people like my necklace and my dress but they don't respect me, my identity. Our culture must be respected and not used as the object for tourism...an object of exploitation. However, I'm not only talking of defending our culture, as we and our ancestors have done, but also developing it. We want to grow as people as well as keep what we have.

MN: Why are your people now learning Spanish?

Rigoberta: We have found it necessary to learn Spanish at this time so that we can communicate with each other. There are twenty different Indian languages. Spanish is a common language inside Guatemala and internationally. So it is a question of learning twenty two languages plus Spanish in order to effectively coordinate our struggles or learn Spanish. Without Spanish I could not be speaking with you now. And so each *campanero* has the responsibility of learning Spanish in order to communicate.

However, we are not learning Spanish to substitute it in place of our own languages. On the contrary, today more than ever we understand the value of our culture and we have the responsibility to save it.

MN: At what moment did this become clear?

Rigoberta: The first revolutionaries were the ones who began the process as the struggles became more popularized (massified) as they had to find ways of communicating to each other and others. Some could understand Quiche but not Quichi or Nichil or some other language which created some big problems. To communicate they had to learn. Later on at all levels of the revolutionary struggle, our *companeros*

learned to read and speak Spanish, as a beginning step. We also studied the conditions of our country. How many of us are there? To what point have we been exploited? How are we discriminated against? Why do they discriminate against us? All this we learned.

MN: What is the relationship between the Left and others involved in the struggle in Guatemala?

Ricardo: The relationship of who with the Left???...in Guatemala we do not see our revolutionaries as Left or of the Left. In Guatemala the people call us los muchachos (the boys). This is really a movement of the people, it does not come from some other place. These are the best sons of our people...like Efrain. Our goal is really to break the old social structure that has kept us subjugated for centuries. However, the regime calls us communists, subversives and guerrillas...this is an old song of theirs.

Efrain: I would like to add several points that need to be made. The first is that the struggle is well integrated. It is sometimes said that only the Ladino people are fighting, that the Indigenous people, as always, are not involved. No, that is not so. The indigenous people of Guatemala, approximately 70% of the population, is also deeply involved. The second is that, for example take me, I am Guatemalan, I am from Quiche, I am an Indigenous person...don't tell me that I am a Cuban here trying to tell you about "the problem" in Guatemala. We are Guatemalans and we are the ones who are fighting. Like my companera said, we are the ones who are fighting, it is the Quiche, it is the Indigenous people, the Ladino, the Guatemalans that are fighting...not the Cubans or Nicaraguans or Russians.

MN: How do the people organize in the face of this repression? What are the different levels of resistance?

Rigoberta: The main form of resistance is the armed resistance...for a very special reason...because our enemies are armed and we know very well that they will not put down their arms unless we organize in the same manner. Since the enemy has all types of military equipment we need an armed revolutionary force, too.

Within this context, one finds many levels of struggles/participation/organization. There are many different types of participation or organization...as campesinos, as Christians, as workers, as journalists, as students...all against the repression of the government. However, the mass struggle is truly the people's armed struggle because the enemy has closed off so much space for us to do things.

However, our people also fight back in various ways without using arms. For example, one wakes up in the morning to find the road covered with fallen trees because when people know that the army is coming they chop the trees down to block the road. Towns have developed emergency plans

to defend themselves...for example so that they can evacuate the town very quickly and quietly as soon as danger gets close. It is in those ways that our people have also shown their ability to use popular arms in order to defend themselves against the army: machetes, stones, spears. In order to protect themselves the people have to organize.

This also includes some manifestations of struggle at the trade union level, although this is usually organized on a clandestine level. In this case workers are organized in a factory but the boss doesn't know who or how.

And then we are here (on an international level) trying to tell the world of the sufferings of my people, of our people's plans and position...we have the armed struggle, the popular struggle and the international struggle.

Ricardo: When Rigoberta spoke of popular struggles she said that trees are knocked down, holes dug and sticks and stones used. Also that communities had emergency plans...these emergency plans are very important. In a community of 60-70 homes, where the weapons are sticks and stones and trees, the people will be massacred when the army arrives with its helicopter, or tank. And so it is very important for us to have an emergency plan so that when the army enters the village the people disappear...the earth eats them up...we hide in the forests or perhaps come out behind the army and give them trouble. During the first period of this type of repression, the people didn't have this type of experience and they just had to learn how to deal with the army to survive. Those that have survived have had to develop these emergency plans. I was told the other day that there is this small town where the army had entered several times...The first couple of times, they caught and killed people. But the people quickly learned to watch for them and when they arrived the town had disappeared...everyone had disappeared...there were even some who climbed trees and yelled at them, swore at them, telling them to come this way...when the soldiers came looking for them they had disappeared...they no longer feared the soldiers.



However, one must remember that when the villages have a lot of little children, it is much harder to move quickly and defend themselves.

MN: We hear in the U.S. that a lot of people are being killed and that it is not just the army doing the killing.

Efrain: Well, all I have to say is that one identifies a bird by its feathers. We know perfectly well that it is the army that enters the communities and villages to massacre our people...by the foot prints they leave (army boots) and by what every one says.

Ricardo: If anyone doubts us, tell them to go to the frontier between Guatemala and Mexico and speak to the people...they'll tell you...it is the army.

MN: What role do women play?

Rigoberta: Obviously we are participating. I am here. Women, men, children, we are all in the struggle. To begin with, positions of leadership, however, are not given out like diplomas...one has to earn them through revolutionary struggle, suffering, collective suffering, and collective struggle. People in positions of leadership are not put there if people don't know them, trust them, know what they think, and aren't clear in their thinking. This also applies to us, women. Although of course, it is true that it has cost women a lot to get actively involved in the struggle; due to a series of characteristics of our culture, customs, beliefs...We have never been given the opportunity to talk, to express our thoughts about the system in an open way...so it has cost us a lot to become actively integrated in these struggles. However, today, we have seen heroic examples of companeras who have died, who have dedicated their lives to the survival of our people, just as there are women that have taken on different tasks in our struggle.

MN: How can we support you in your struggles...more specifically?

Rigoberta: As the compaero was emphasizing, we need solidarity at all levels: moral support, political aid, economic aid...precisely because a large number of communities are in danger of being exterminated. We are fighting to change this situation, but we need the help of others.

Concretely, we need the North American people to put pressure on their government so that it stops making war on our continent...not just Guatemala...but our continent. We want to be alone so that we can determine our own futures. We hope that North American people will tell their government that the poor here in the U.S. need jobs and decent wages - things that are denied them because their government spends so much money supporting repressive governments and foreign wars. Let the U.S.

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government leave us in peace - we are prepared, determined and willing to choose our own destiny. We are worried that much more blood will be shed. If they don't stop, we know that this will be another Viet Nam in Central America...a lot of blood will be spilled, is being spilled.

MN: Do you have anything to say to the Native Americans in this country?

Efrain: I would like to say that, I too am a native American. Not only here in North America, but in Central and South America, it is time that we unite as Native Americans to struggle for our liberation... along with other peoples in the Americas.

Rigoberta: I would like to say to them that it is time that the voice of the Indian be heard again, that we break our divisions/boundaries and that other peoples recognize and respect us. We are here today to bring down these boundaries. It is time we talk, understand each other, understand our common struggles, and support each other...we ask their support.

MN: And to the Hispanics in this country?

Rigoberta: As Latinos, as poor people, I understand that a great part of those who immigrated to this country from Latin America left from necessity, both economic and political. In their struggles they have ended up in this country...and with other problems. I also understand that they also have high aspirations and that they identify themselves as Hispanics. I believe that it is their responsibility to support us... struggle to support us...we are their brothers and sisters...they are also brothers and sisters of the poor people of all parts of the world.



## THE TWO HERCES AND THE REBELLIOUS DAUGHTER

Twin brothers, expert in the sacred ball game, arouse the envy of the two gods of death who challenge them to a match in the Underworld. The mortals play, lose and are killed. By a miracle, the maiden daughter of the death god Blood Chief bears the brothers' successors, the Hero Twins. They grow to manhood -- and mastery of the ritual game as well as of the blow gun -- in the world. Again the death gods send their challenge, and the Hero Twins begin their journey into the realm of dread and horror. They beat the lords in the ball game but then they pass through many ordeals in the Underworld, including a night they must spend in the House of the Killer Bats, where they sleep in their blow guns. Later, they become magicians, slashing each other apart and becoming whole again. Asked to perform the same trick on the two gods of death, they leave them dismembered and ascend from the Underworld to become transformed into the first benign gods, the Sun and Moon.

# Or Di A Fra Dolcin...

The following three documents arise from and describe the latest period of state repression and working class response in Italy. The first deals with the bloody extirpation of a peaceful prison protest at San Vittore Prison in Milan (reprinted from CARI's Dossier on Torture and Prison Conditions in Italy: 1979-1983). The second deals with the Autonomia trials in progress as MN goes to press (reprinted from CARI Bulletin #8). The third is a report by an Italian militant on a resurgence of open resistance in a traditional class center, the large-scale factory complexes of northern Italy, in the winter of 1982-83. All three have been edited by MN.

The post-1979 ferocity of the Italian state is unprecedented in a European context in the last decade. This state brutality is an indication of the "unique" position the Italian working class movement had between 1973-1977, as measured by its generalizing power: starting from its original factory-university base in 1969, the movement circulated in the community, stimulated and was transformed by the feminist and gay movements, and incorporated the "marginalized" social sectors (especially "unemployed" youth) into a vital, multi-faceted oppositional force. The movement was characterized by mass direct action against the "austerity" measures of the state (see the "self-reduction" campaigns of 1974-75) as well as the level of mass "violence" (as seen in the Bologna and Rome demonstrations in the Spring of 1977). This led to an improbable, but palpable revolutionary possibility in Italy typified by the wide-spread failure of capital and the state to control the movement either on an economic, political or police plane.

Yet the movement did prove to be isolatable and vulnerable when the State began a coordinated attack on an economic (re-structuring the assembly-line at companies like FIAT; developing small "underground" as well as middle-sized plants which diffused militant nuclei; cutting the social wage), institutional (creating a "united front of major parties" including the Italian Communist Party against the oppositional movement), legal (passage of special "emergency laws", creation of new legal statuses like "terrorist" and "pentiti"), penal (creation of special political prisons, regularizing torture, using isolation cells), police (the formation of an "anti-terrorist" parallel state with autonomous police powers), and international level (active support for the introduction of US missiles into Europe). More than 3,500 political prisoners have been jailed, thousands have gone underground, and thousands more have

emigrated to escape actual or potential prosecution. A generation of struggle has been criminalized, with consequences yet to be understood.

In this context, it is important to note that the people arrested, tortured and exiled are far from politically homogenous. Two foci can be readily distinguished: those who have taken the Red Brigades line and those who have been involved in the area of Autonomia. The state has systematically tried to erase all political differentiation in its public analysis of the opposition, and has tried to argue, in the face of overwhelming negative evidence, that all opposition was united into one organization under the leadership of Antonio Negri, one of the theoretical leaders of Autonomia.

The falsity of the charge can readily be seen by the radically different responses that the Red Brigades and the Autonomists have had to the question of legality. The Brigades have taken the "prisoner of war" route and have refused to carry out a legal defense, claiming that they have declared war on the "state of the multinationals", and so have nothing to say to the state. On the other side, the Autonomia defendants have demanded trial and have claimed their full legal rights, e.g., freedom of speech, speedy trial, fixed charges, bail, etc. These, the state has refused to grant. This stance of the Autonomists has not been merely tactical, but must be interpreted in political terms. That is, legal rights cannot just be seen as "bourgeois" any more than the wage can be. It is an expression of working class power within a capitalist form. No more would one throw away one's paycheck than one would "throw away one's rights". True, one does not fight for the wage system, but once in it the point is not to give any gains back as though we were beyond the system. Again, just as with wages for work where one wins more wages by refusing to work, so too with legal 'rights' where one wins them by refusing to accept the bounds of present legality. Thus Negri and the other April 7th defendants have tried to preserve their (and the class') rights against capital.

By the way, the "Fra Dolcin" of the title is the medieval communist heretic whom Mohammed, head of the schismatics according to Dante, warns to gather up provisions against a long siege by the ruling Pope Clement.



# The New Inferno

The "revolt" in San Vittore started on July 20, 1981 (the prisoners, however, denounced the press for calling this peaceful protest a "revolt"). It began with the demand that one of the prisoners be allowed to attend the funeral of a parent and another be returned from an isolation cell on the 4th floor -- notorious as the place where people are taken to be beaten or broken down psychologically through prolonged periods of isolation, or to be tortured.

Soon the protest widened to include a broad range of demands concerning the rights of prisoners: better food, the demand to work, since this is the only source of income many prisoners have, the right to have two more hours of "air" a day (the prisoners spend twenty hours a day locked in their cells), against sudden announced transfers, for more medical care, against the continuous searches in the cells often accompanied by beatings and the destruction of personal belongings (books, food, clothes...), to have chairs, against the systematic use of long isolation periods (often involving beatings and torture) after arrest or at any act of "insubordination", and to increase their social spaces. Central to the struggle was the request for a higher level of sociality in the jail and against the repression of all forms of affectivity and sexuality, "How many years without love? We have the right to some affection," was one of the slogans of the prisoners, who demanded the possibility to communicate between the male and female sections and visits allowing for more flesh on flesh relations with their relatives (kissing, touching, embracing their children).

The protest that lasted through the month of August was carried on by peaceful means -- the prisoners refused at times to return from the "air", those who had jobs in the jail went on strike, the prisoners would jump over the large wooden tables that separated them from their relatives during visits. Moreover, in collaboration with a movement radio in Milan they organized a series of broadcasts that provided a daily chronicle of the struggle and publicized the conditions of the jail.

But despite the peaceful nature of the protest, it was suffocated in blood. On the night of 9/22/81 the retaliation came in the form of a general massacre that made blood flow through the corridors of the jail. The following is an account of this massacre by "The survivors of the night of San Bartolomeo in the second wing of the jail of San Vittore":

"Last night there was much tension in the jail. The guards had gone up to the 4th floor of the second wing -- where the 'political prisoners' are -- after fixing up a gate they unleashed the dogs. To make

their intentions known before leaving they screamed to us: "Terrorists, murderers, we will MASSACRE you." There was panic, anxiety, anguish. We felt the smell of the 'squads', we already smelled our blood on the floor... then the guards went away but we could not sleep any longer. It was the third night that they screamed threats and this time they had done it from our wing. Then in the silence of the night we heard many noises: trucks, dogs, voices. We kept doubting it was our paranoia that made us imagine everything. Suddenly around 4:30 the voices concentrated in screams of agony and pain, and the noise of a savage beating coming from nearby -- from the 1st wing. Climbing on the window we saw nightmare scenes: ten guards beating brutally a prisoner naked in front of a window with kicks, clubs -- to be better seen the pigs opened the windows and in the yellow night, because of the lighted beams, the hell of San Vittore looked really like one of Dante's circles. Powerless, we see a wretched guy thrown down the stairs, chased by the military boots worn on the occasion by the guards. Floor after floor we see -- on purpose they stop at each to make us see what they can do -- the naked body covered with bruises and blood. Then we only hear his screams and the noise of the beatings, his screams that call for help, the pain gets through the wall and though we don't see him any more we guess every kick, every blow, with which they bring him to his cell and hear that the beatings continue there. Proud of their strength the guards return to the window, they are too far away to be recognized, they look towards the second wing and scream again. We see them well: excited, unleashed against us and we see that they brandish wooden clubs, they are without helmets, others respond to their shouts. We hear them approaching...

Before they come to our floor we barricade as best we can...we hear the noise of the key and an intense noise of footsteps -- this time there are really many of them. We had quickly agreed to keep telling each other what was happening: each cell is a very vulnerable micro-world and it's important to know what happens in each of them... Only from the use of so much violence so openly displayed we can understand that this is organized by the head of the jail and is not the usual initiative of some crazy guards. We're all conscious that our improvised barricades are useless, so we decide, passing the word, screaming at the top of our lungs from window to window, to surrender (the occupation troops have won over the unarmed hostages they keep in their hands) and tell them we're ready to take down the barricades and come out with our hands raised...As soon as the barricades are taken down they come in, beat us and drag us out. Then they choose who remains and who's going to be transferred. For those who remain that's the end of it -- for the moment -- for those who are transferred the beating continues. It is a mas-





sacre...This is how the 'democratic' Dotto (the director of the jail) has responded to the social demands of eight months of struggles. The 'normalization' of the jail has not been carried on only in our wing, but all over the jail with bands of hundreds of guards armed with clubs and all sorts of unofficial weapons and the cover of a 1000 carabinieri...."

The following is an account of a woman prisoner of that night:

"In the morning about five, perhaps earlier -- we first hear desperate screams: screams of the women in the nursery, screams of children so violent that we understand that at the nursery something terrible is happening. Half asleep I don't understand

what's happening. I think it's a fire or something like that. Then we hear the men running upstairs. We understand, they are transferring people. There are at least fifty agents -- something terrifying in itself if one thinks that there are only three women to a cell. They enter the cell near ours and drag out the three sisters there. We don't see anything. Our metal door has been closed. We hear noises. After a while we hear another cell being opened.

Then they come to ours. We almost had no time to know what's happening and we are all in our sleeping gowns. They come in. They tell Federica she must leave. She asks to get dressed in the presence of a guard. We remain absolutely immobile. We have understood that they want to beat us up -- we can read it in their faces, and we don't want to give them any excuse to do it. Suddenly and without any apparent reason they take us all three and begin to push us around. I lose contact with the others; I only see a multitude of agents who drag me downstairs, beating me on the back, tearing my hair. They throw me on the ground at the place of transfer half naked, my sleeping gown ripped. Federica has already left, and so have Tata and Pia who were at the nursery with their children...I know that we were not crazy, we hadn't resisted, there were fifty of them against three women in sleeping gowns...They wanted to beat us up, they had already decided it. Then the trip to Genova I was feeling sick with the beatings, the blood I would find in my hair, the nausea and everything else."

## Autonomia in Purgatory

Four years after the first waves of arrests on April 7 and December 21, 1979 hundreds of Autonomia militants are presently on trial in Italy. Three trials are actually under way. The main one is in Rome against 71 defendants who are charged with subversive association, participation in an armed band and in twelve cases insurrection against the powers of the state. Another one is held in Padova, still against dozens of Autonomia militants, and a third one in Milan against the members of the journal Rosso (Red) which is accused of being a front for an underground organization.

Despite its three-pronged character, however, this is one trial, that by the nature of the charges, the number of militants involved and the exceptional way in which it has been constructed has clearly become the major political trial in the history of the Italian Republic and a key test for what the future of political life in Italy will be. The trial is political in more than one way.

1) Many of the defendants are well-known figures in the Italian Movement, who through their writings and organizational activities have played an important role in the struggles of the sixties and seventies. Others belong to a younger generation that was the backbone of the youth-student movement of 1977. All of these are charged with being part of one subversive project culminating in the attempt by some master-minds to organize an insurrection against the state. Fifteen years of social struggles in Italy are thus being presented as a conspiratorial, criminal project that can only be dealt in a repressive and penal fashion. Indeed, no effort has been spared to create the impression that these people are "Public Enemies Number 1". An impressive display of military power has been arranged. Helicopters fly over the building where the Rome trial is held, while a tank and numerous high-speed police cars patrol the surrounding area. The gates of the building have been electrified and a meticulous check is enforced on the lawyers, journalists and families who attend it. The defendants are transported chained to each other and are kept in cages in Court, divided by several rails from the public.

2) Not only are the charges exclusively political -- subversive association, insurrection against the state -- the way in which the trial has been constructed follows the classical model of political purges. No factual evidence has so far been presented, while in its place, a large role is played by the political judgements of the accusers as well as the writings of the accused.

3) The trial represents a turning point in the Italian "Justice" system, as it is conducted in violation of the most elementary rules of Italian law. Examples of such violations are: (a) the use of substitute charges, a novelty in the Italian legal system, which has served to ensure the continual incarceration of the defendants in face of the repeated collapse of the charges moved against them. That is, several times in the course of these four years, the defendants have seen the charges against them dropped and substituted by new ones -- a procedure indicating the spurious nature of the accusations and the lack of any real evidence in the hands of the accusers. Furthermore, in most cases, the defendants were not formally notified about the new charges (often they found out from the newspapers) and were never re-interrogated as prescribed by Italian law (Article 376 of the Code). Some defendants, charged with insurrection against the state have been interrogated only once since their arrest on April 7, 1979. (b) the vague and imprecise nature of the charges. Typical is the charge of insurrection against the state, originally moved only against Antonio Negri, who presumably had organised it all by himself. Even when the accusations involve "facts", they are totally unspecified as to the date and the location of the crimes. (c) the only evidence for most of the charges are the confessions of "repented" militants who have collaborated with the police in exchange for immunity. Moreover, though the accused have insistently asked for a cross-examination, this has been denied and some repented whose testimony has led to the incarceration of dozens of people do not even appear in the trial. (d) finally, the fact that the trial is held in three different places violates the right to the defense, for not being ubiquitous, several defendants won't be able to attend their trial.

In view of this arbitrary, illegal procedure, at the beginning of the Rome trial on February 24, 1983 the defense lawyers have unanimously asked that the defendants be freed and the trial be declared null and void. They have argued that their objections to the form of the procedure go in this case to the roots of the matter, for only by an abrogation of the law can such a trial take place. How, for example, can anybody be accused of theft when what was claimed to be stolen, when and where is left unspecified?

Their request, however, has been rejected. For the Italian state seems much more interested in crushing an uncomfortable opposition than in upholding the "guarantees" of the democratic process. More than that: redefining what the democratic process should be -- and what are the limits of political struggles is one of the main aims of the trial.



Already, over the last four years civil and political liberties in Italy have been dramatically curtailed. Special laws have been enacted allegedly in the "struggle against terrorism." Increasingly even the most peaceful forms of protest are responded to with police clubs -- witness the brutal treatment inflicted on the women who on March 8, 1983 protested the planned installation of the cruise missiles at Comiso, Sicily. In this context the trial against Autonomia is a pilot trial codifying for years to come the new criteria of legality in the operations of the state.

This is why it is crucial that we protest this arbitrary procedure and show our support for the people on trial. Irrespectively of whether we agree with their politics, the inquisitional process mounted against them is an unacceptable violation of political rights that represents a dangerous precedent in Europe; moreover, what is happening in Italy is not an isolated case. The increasingly repressive measures adopted by the US and Canadian governments against internal dissidents suggests that the "Italian way" may well become a model of our future if it proves successful in Italy. So it is in our interest to protest the violations of civil rights perpetrated by the Italian state against the April 7/December 21 defendants.

# Moving toward Paradise?

In the period between December 1982-January 1983, there has been a concrete and widespread development of autonomous decision-making on the kind of political actions to be undertaken against the capitalist state (in the face of a policy of repression agreed to by all the major political parties, especially the Italian Communist Party). The autonomy expressed in this "Hot Winter" constitutes the result and synthesis of all the experience that had been assimilated, elaborated and spread by the proletarian movement since the 1969 "Hot Autumn".

The first signs of the renewed generalized struggle date from the autumn of 1982, during the negotiations on modifying the "scala mobile", the wage-indexation system which until then had automatically increased wages with inflation. During that period the workers re-asserted their will to impose their own interests on decisions affecting their class. In many places where workers had temporarily lost confidence in their capacity to sway decisions, their mass participation in workers' assemblies now brought about a decisive rejection of the unions' proposal to accept a reduction in the "scala mobile". It also brought about an immediate strengthening of the workers' confidence in voicing their own demands.

In December 1982 the Prime Minister Fanfani engineered a series of measures which further reduced the proletariat's standard of living. Such measures were met by strikes and demonstrations organized by workers autonomously from the unions' instructions. Union representatives attempting to regain control were accused of collaborating with the state and employers.

The rupture was such that, during the general strike of January 18, 1983, not a single union leader dared to address the mass demonstrations held in piazzas throughout Italy. It was the first such "silent general strike" in Italy's history. The union leaders' fear of speaking was motivated by the certainty that, had they publicly revealed the agreements they were about to make with the employers, they would have fared even worse than the union leaders who had done so the previous week. During that week, when the national trade union leader Marianetti had spoken in Bologna's main piazza to criticize the workers' actions, he'd been forced to leave the platform -- but not before the workers had covered his voice with insults and his body with eggs. So on January 18th union leaders dared not announce their willingness to reduce the "scala mobile" by 10% (as opposed to the 30% reduction demanded by the employers).

During this process of rupture between workers and unions, the Fanfani government

announced a number of anti-proletarian austerity measures. The events which followed threw into confusion the state's plans grounded on the "patto sociale" (the social pact, or employers' "peace") and repressive laws. These plans faltered as key centers of transport and communications were disrupted by hundreds of demonstrations and occupations, involving hundreds of thousands of people -- workers and unemployed, men and women, young and old. As motorways, railroad stations and airports were taken over, the government used special repressive laws to attack and criminalize these actions -- but only very selectively, so as not to provoke and further escalate the battle. The occupations included the Genova airport, where people sat on the runways to prevent planes from taking off or landing; the railroad stations of Florence, Palermo, Naples and Rome; the motorway near Termini Imerese in Sicily, and dozens of other major roads throughout Italy.

With demonstrations of this sort continuing for several days, the Interior Minister threatened to intervene further with repressive forces. He organized meetings with trade union leaders, who afterwards made strong condemnations against these mass actions. This state tactic achieved the opposite effect of what the state expected -- that is, it separated the workers even further from the unions and provoked further mass action. For example, Genova airport, which had been evacuated, was then reoccupied four times more. Railway stations and major roads were again occupied in many towns and villages throughout Italy.

Because of these mass actions, the government finally withdrew some of the less popular austerity measures. Other measures demanded by workers, such as tax reductions, were accepted. However, at the same time, the trade union confederations signed an agreement accepting demands of the government and employers. For example they agreed to a 20% reduction of the "scala mobile", that is double the reduction that had been envisaged by the unions and definitively rejected by the workers in mass assemblies. The unions signed this agreement knowing full well that the workers would again reject it even more decisively than before. Such a rejection meant not only a "disappointment" with the unions, it implied a workers' rupture from the traditional workers' organizations.



This kind of rupture had already existed in the 1970s, but mostly at a "vanguard" level, among the most militant sections of the proletariat. In the mid-1970s this rupture took on an offensive mass character, as the vanguards succeeded in winning away the workers from the collaborationist institutions. Despite the retreat of the movement since the late 1970s, hostility towards the collaborationist forces has continued to develop. And now, by comparison to the last decade, it's becoming increasingly difficult for those forces to contain the conflict expressed in hundreds of anti-capitalist revolts.

A typical example of recent developments based on earlier initiatives is provided by the events at ANSALDO, the most important industrial complex in Genova and one of the largest in Italy. It was the ANSALDO workers who marched to the Genova airport and took it over. At the same time they overwhelmingly rejected the agreement between the unions and employers. The Communist Party daily newspaper Unita went as far as to say that these workers' public declarations "put them firmly outside the framework of the traditional workers' union confederations".

Previously the PCI, confident that the workers would accept the agreement, had supported it in Parliament and in the unions. Yet even the PCI, in an article written by one of the Party's top leaders, had to admit that their political leadership could no longer control the workers of the ANSALDO factory. That admission, signifies the leaders' preoccupation with the precarious control that the Party and unions have over the factory working class in particular and the proletariat more generally. This was especially because the ANSALDO workers' rejection of the agreement signed by their unions spread to the majority of the factories in Italy. Thus the workers rejected not simply a particular agreement in itself but also the entire political line of the trade union confederation.

The entire "hot Winter" of struggles was organized and realized by proletarians for their own chosen objectives and with their own forms of struggle. It was carried out despite the inquisitorial climate of police repression and mass media obsession with 'terrorist suspects' supposedly conspiring to foment all such actions of mass illegality. These actions have not only changed the political situation -- they've also opened up a new phase of struggles against repression, which has by no means ended.

For example in recent months the police have attacked proletarian marches, as in Naples and Rome (including even a march of blind people). Judges have issued arrest warrants against leading figures in those struggles such as against over a hundred named workers at the Magneti Marelli factory in Milan. At Alfa Romero (also in Milan), where the police arrested a revolutionary communist worker, the other workers responded by striking and marching into the courthouse to meet with judges, to distribute leaflets and to hold a press conference against the arrest of their comrade, who was later released. In the four years since the mass arrests of revolutionary communists began in 1979, this was the first time that workers responded in such a way.



*The Recording Angel of the Presence. Divine Comedy, 1824-7*

# Audit of the Crisis

The "energy crisis", capital's response to the crisis imposed by class struggle internationally, planned a re-composition of terrestrial accumulation based upon a re-shaping of the hierarchy of labor powers. The oil price hikes enabled an increase in the surplus share of value (brought about by a reduction in the class wage of US workers in particular) and a shift in who obtained the surplus (the energy multi-nationals, the banks and the oil-export states). The accumulation materialized largely as modernized and expanded production capacity in four locales: in Eastern Europe, particularly Poland; in the Middle East, most importantly Iran; in the Far East export states, Taiwan, South Korea, Singapore, Hong Kong; and in selected Latin American nations, both oil exporters (Venezuela, Mexico) and manufacturing export states, particularly Brazil with its large (though relatively underdeveloped) domestic market. In this circulation of productive value, debts began to escalate rapidly to fuel a "development" boom. With the increase of commodity and capital imports in Third

World states and the expansion of their exports, trade with the US, Western Europe and Japan increased all around, pushing interdependency among nation states as capital itself became more international on a wider and deeper level. The flows of money capital sped up and their mirror image, expressed in large-scale immigration, intensified, especially in movements within the Third World, e.g., Southeast Asian workers being drawn into the oil fields of the Persian Gulf.

However, this plan for a new cycle of development collapsed in 1979. This report, written on the eve of the tenth anniversary of "The Crisis", will give an accounting of the consequences of the 1979 collapse and the prospects of a capitalist "recovery". Our examinations were made in accordance with generally accepted struggle auditing standards and, accordingly, included such tests of the struggle records and such other auditing procedures as we considered necessary in the circumstances.

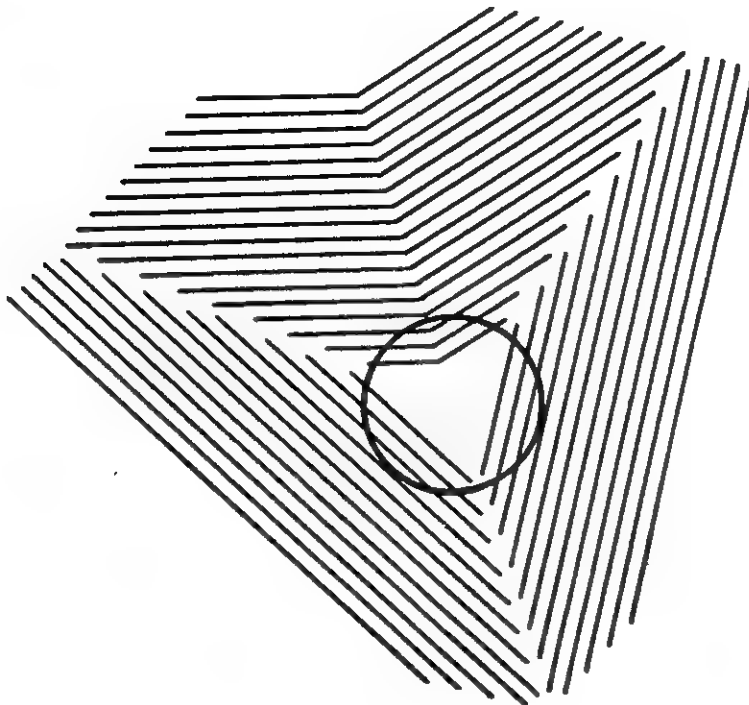


Fig. 1: Diagrammatic analysis of statistical principles.

# Balance Sheet, 1979

In the first phase of "The Crisis", between 1973 and 1979, the US working class appeared to be the "weak link" in the international struggle cycle. But even in the US, wage demands re-escalated after the "oil price induced" recession of 1974-1975, revealing that the "inflationary wage pressures" had not been sufficiently tamed, both in its old strongholds in assembly-line manufacturing and mining and in the social struggles of women, gays, anti-nukers, etc. European and Japanese wages, on a class level, had reached rough parity with the US. All through this period a persistent wage struggle continued across Europe, despite some sharp defeats in Italy, imposing a developing profits crisis. Thus, in this period the hoped for positive shift in the profits/wage ratio was at best marginal.

Thus, capital became increasingly dependent upon the success of its plans for accumulation in Eastern Europe, Asia, Africa and Latin America. But it was exactly in these areas that capital discovered its greatest liabilities:

--Iran was the most important. This focal point of capitalist strategy exploded in its face, removing not only billions of dollars of investments but, more importantly, revealing a deep "refusal of development" by the Third World proletariat that had been most prized. That the revolution of technicians, industrial workers, "lumpen" city dwellers and peasants turned on each other, and all attacked women and gays, was certainly a great relief to capital. Khomeini's counter-revolution revealed quickly that Islamic fundamentalism did not threaten capitalism even on a regional scale and, if anything, blocked and repressed insurrectionary pressures throughout the Middle East, e.g., the Israeli obliteration of Beirut presupposed the massacre of the Iranian revolutionary youth and the Iran-Iraq war. On balance, the revolution of February 1979 was, as we accountants say, a "mutual destruction of classes" but it definitively showed that "oil crisis" model of world accumulation could not go ahead as planned.

--The plan, jointly held by east European state capital and western international capital, to use presumably disciplined, low-waged east European workers for accumulation on a more "modern" basis was destroyed by the Polish workers revolt of 1980. Again religion, in this case Catholicism, helped stalemate the revolt while the Western banks and the immediate threat of Soviet "tanks" confined it; but Poland deepens in its non-profitability as the Polish workers demand and get seemingly perpetual subsidies from western and eastern capital. Certainly, the Gdansk revolt spilled over into Russia and has put "development" possibilities in question there for all of Andropov's raids on the Turkish baths at 10 AM.

--Events of 1978 and 1979 upset both sides of capital's plan in Africa and Latin America as well. The victory of the Sandinistas in Nicaragua overcame the terror left by the Chilean coup that began "The Crisis" and created a momentum that threatened to ignite a region-wide civil war which, if started, would not necessarily be kept south of Mexico's oil fields and north of Panama's canal. While across the South Atlantic, the successful war in Zimbabwe deepened the threat to the one major center of accumulation and high profits in the continent, South Africa.

These revolts and civil wars were crucial for The Crisis not only because of their temporal coincidence and their spatial dispersion. They destroyed the very hierarchy of labor powers that the "energy crisis" was to produce: the integration of socialist labor was blocked (Poland); the creation of oil money based export economies was aborted (Iran); the repression of "basket case" countries was overturned (Nicaragua, Zimbabwe). The balance sheet of 1979 was definitely in the red. Combining these defeats with the lack of definitive halts of wage increases in Europe, Japan and the US, forced capital to end the tactic of "oil crisis". True, the working class internationally has not been powerful enough to use these assets to generalize and escalate the level of struggle, for these victories were partially blocked even in locales of highest immediate success (e.g., the very Iran, Poland, Zimbabwe of our inventory). Indeed, capital had to deepen the crisis in order to attack the working class where it showed strength to prevent the "spread of insolvency". Capital's solution was the "global slowdown".

TABLE B-109 — Growth rates in real gross national product, 1960-82  
(Percent change)

Area and country	1960-73 annual average	1974-81 annual average	1978	1979	1980	1981	1982 <sup>1</sup>	U.S. dollar value in 1981 (billions) <sup>2</sup>
Developed countries <sup>3</sup>	5.1	2.7	4.1	3.5	1.2	1.4	-5	7,020
United States	4.1	2.7	4.8	3.2	-2	2.0	-1.8	2,876
Canada	5.6	2.6	3.7	3.0	0	3.0	-5.0	280
Japan	10.4	4.4	5.1	5.6	4.2	2.8	2.5	1,150
European Community <sup>4</sup>	4.7	1.9	3.1	3.4	1.3	-4	3	2,420
France	5.8	2.5	3.7	3.6	1.6	-2	-3.5	577
West Germany	4.7	2.2	3.6	3.6	1.9	-2	-1.5	667
Italy	5.2	2.1	2.7	4.8	4.0	-12	1	299
United Kingdom	3.1	1.9	3.3	1.4	-1.7	-8	5	502
Other developed countries	5.1	1.9	2.1	-1.7	4.0	5.2	(*)	245
Developing countries	5.8	4.4	4.3	4.1	4.5	2.7	8	1,965
Oil exporting countries <sup>5</sup>	3.7	6.7	3.2	2.0	-5	1.2	1.2	540
Other	4.6	3.3	4.5	5.8	3.1	7	7	1,425
Communist countries <sup>6</sup>	5.2	2.7	4.2	1.6	1.9	1.2	1.4	2,740
U.S.S.R.	5.2	2.3	3.4	8	1.5	1.8	1.6	1,587
Eastern Europe	4.1	1.8	3.0	1.3	4	-1.0	-7	671
China	6.5	5.9	12.3	6.9	6.9	3.0	5.0	326
TOTAL	5.2	2.9	2.8	2.8	1.8	1.8	2	11,725

<sup>1</sup> Preliminary estimates.  
<sup>2</sup> Estimates based on conversion at average rates of exchange for 1980, except for those of the Communist countries, which were converted at U.S. purchasing power equivalents.  
<sup>3</sup> Includes the OECD countries, South Africa, and non-OECD Europe.  
<sup>4</sup> Includes Belgium-Luxembourg, Denmark, Greece, Ireland, and the Netherlands, not shown separately.  
<sup>5</sup> Not available.  
<sup>6</sup> Includes Algeria, Ecuador, Gabon, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Libya, Nigeria, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, and Venezuela.  
<sup>7</sup> Includes North Korea, Vietnam, Albania, Cuba, Mongolia, and Yugoslavia, not shown separately.  
 Sources: Department of Commerce, International Monetary Fund, Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), and Council of Economic Advisors.



# The Global Slowdown

## Send Lawyers, Guns and Money, The Shit Has Hit the Fan

The Depression of 1980-1983 was capital's answer to the failure of the "oil crisis" to reshape world organic composition and the hierarchy of labor powers. It was quite consciously induced by Carter's appointee to the Fed, Paul Volker, beginning in the fall of 1979 with the steep climb of interest rates. All this was done with the blessings of international capital to accomplish several aims:

--Capital saw the necessity to conclusively write-off the old power centers of the US working class while lowering the class wage bill still further; particularly for the lowest categories, women and children on "welfare". The object: "austerity". The meaning: an indefinitely lowering "standard of living" in exchange for the intensification of work and social discipline, deepening the divisions and competition within the working class.

--The "slowdown" was to be a mechanism to slow and reverse the wages spiral in Western Europe where social struggles had rapidly escalated reaching a peak with the post-1968 generation's increasing "refusal of work". The strategy also sought to pit "native" against "immigrant" workers, often succeeding with the complicity of the Left (e.g., the French C.P.'s anti-Algerian actions). Japan, too, "needed" a wages slowdown.

--Since Iran had revealed that oil-price-fueled capitalist transformation could be massively subverted, that type of transformation had to slow. Depression in the US and UK, recession in Japan and Europe curtailed the flow of value to the oil producers. Oil company profits were lowered, but so was the risk. This strategy also enable the intensification of divisions within African and Middle Eastern regions, e.g., the Nigerian expulsion and slaughter of Ghanaian "guest workers".

--The acceptance of defeat by the US working class expressed itself, in part, as increased chauvinism (against Iran, for example) and an inability to go beyond the coat-tails of the liberal bourgeoisie. This smoothed the way for increased militarism including a vast expansion of military aid to El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras, supporting South Africa against SWAPO in Namibia, openly organizing counter-revolution in Nicaragua and Angola.

The problem, however, had been that capital had not been able to solve its problems militarily. The US could not "send in the Marines" to Iran, Zimbabwe or Nicaragua. The power of such intervention is its concentration, its targeted repression. If the US could have responded to the Latin American or African situations militarily its plans would not have been so undermined on a world scale. Though

surely the US had the technical means to attack these struggles, it was politically blocked both domestically and regionally. Thus the tool of attack became money. The combination of high interest and global slowdown created a different form of repression, however. Money is unlike military intervention since its very universality and abstractness make it difficult to confine geographically. As a consequence, the money squeeze not only attacked the trouble centers but also the Latin American, Asian and African export centers which were relatively under control, trouble-free and profitable. The form of the crisis, instead of becoming a global war, has been a "debt crisis".

### CORPORATE PROFITS AND FINANCE

TABLE B-82 -- Corporate profits with inventory valuation and capital consumption adjustments  
(Billions of dollars, quarterly data at seasonally adjusted annual rates)

	Corporate profits with inventory valuation and capital consumption adjustments	Corporate profits tax liability	Profits after tax with inventory valuation and capital consumption adjustments		
			Total	Dividends	Undistributed profits with inventory valuation and capital consumption adjustments
1929	90	14	77	58	19
1933	-17	5	23	20	43
1939	53	14	39	38	1
1940	86	28	58	40	18
1941	141	76	65	44	21
1942	193	114	79	43	36
1943	275	141	95	44	50
1944	238	129	107	46	61
1945	190	107	84	46	38
1946	166	91	75	56	19
1947	223	113	110	63	47
1948	294	124	170	70	100
1949	271	102	169	72	97
1950	339	179	160	88	72
1951	387	226	161	85	76
1952	361	194	167	85	82
1953	363	203	160	88	72
1954	352	176	175	91	84
1955	455	220	234	103	131
1956	437	220	218	111	107
1957	433	214	218	115	103
1958	385	190	195	113	82
1959	496	236	260	122	138
1960	476	227	249	129	121
1961	486	228	258	133	125
1962	569	240	329	144	185
1963	621	262	359	155	204
1964	632	280	412	173	239
1965	800	309	491	191	300
1966	851	317	514	194	320
1967	824	325	499	202	297
1968	891	332	560	228	332
1969	851	385	456	225	231
1970	714	342	372	225	148
1971	832	375	457	228	229
1972	964	416	548	244	304
1973	1083	490	593	270	323
1974	949	516	433	299	134
1975	1105	586	589	308	281
1976	1381	638	743	374	369
1977	1673	727	946	408	537
1978	1924	832	1091	478	613
1979	1948	876	1072	527	545
1980	1816	847	970	581	389
1981	1906	812	1095	651	444
1982	1611	568	1023	703	321

Source: Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis

# The International Debtor's Prison

When capital responded with the "global slowdown", the nations which had played their part in the "oil price" strategy by importing capital at exorbitant prices found themselves unable to meet the payments as the market shrank for their goods. The amounts owed are now immense, totalling \$650 billion or more, much of it owed to private western banks, the remnants of the recycled "petrodollars". Not only are the amounts huge, but the payments due often exceed export earnings. De facto default has been entered into by Poland, Mexico, Argentina, Brazil, and Romainia, with more sure to follow.

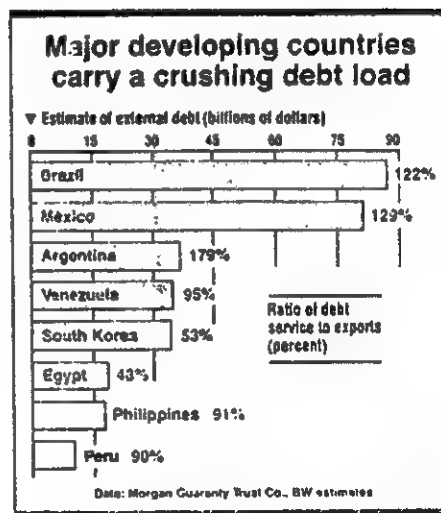
What, really, does this mean? Is it the imminent collapse of the world money and banking system? Many accountants of the class struggle think so, for they believe that capital will follow its own rules. But in this, they are mistaken. For accounting is in the "realm of appearance" and its rules can be changed to express deeper imperatives.

One problem, as Henry Kissinger noted, is that "A blowup is certain sooner or later if debtor countries are asked to accept prolonged austerity simply to protect the balance sheets of foreign banks." Argentina already has refused to do so; in November 1982 it unilaterally announced it would convert \$5 billion of debt into five year bonds at low interest, and the banks accepted it. In December, riots led to wage and unemployment benefit increases in defiance of IMF austerity measures previously accepted by the government. In January 1983, Jorge Triaca, a leader of the Argentine General Labor Confederation, stated, "If there are no signs of recovery, Buenos Aires will be Beirut in six months."

Argentina is not alone. The Sergeant's coup in Liberia was preceded by food riots. Both of Rawlings' coups in Ghana followed unrest over the economy. Strife in Mexico over land has been endemic, and the deep fear is that Indian unrest in Guatemala could spread to southern Mexico. In Brazil's recent rigged elections, the opposition won the popular vote overwhelmingly. Etc., etc., etc.,...

In response, capital's thinking has moved in several directions. One is to "rationalize" debt. IMF austerity programs have come in for criticism from many sources as being counter-productive. The absence of a sufficient mechanism to organize the re-structuring of debt has been bemoaned incessantly. Whether the IMF can be re-shaped to catch up to modern needs or whether a new organization must be created is a point of debate. That this form of crisis should be the occasion for a higher level of world capitalist organization and planning, here through the monetary system, is widely accepted.

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Fundamental agreement on these points has been indicated by Kissinger, US Treasury Secretary Regan, former New York City M.A.C. head Felix Rohatyn, Citibank's Walter Wriston, Norman Bailey of the US National Security Council, liberals and conservatives ad nauseum.

But as we have seen, the root problem is not the lack of capitalist planning, but rather the lack of control over the working class. The real discussion is not over monetary mechanisms per se, but over who will pay the debts.

The possibility of a debt cartel is thus presented as a threat (Kissinger, Business Week) or a hope (elements of the Left). In fact, capitalistically speaking, whether one negotiator or many sit at the table and which is preferable is merely a tactical issue. The OPEC cartel in unity served accumulation well at one stage; in disunity it now serves as well the strategic slowing of accumulation needed for the restructuring of accumulation. That a debt cartel may obtain a better deal for its members and that this better deal may become a better deal for the working class of the various nation-states is by no means certain. Who will pay will emerge from the struggles within and between the working class and capital outside the conference room and table.

The amount owed in debt, that claim on future labor power, less a deduction for a decline in inflation, leaving principle and 'real' interest (the minimal cost, plus profit), must be paid by someone. For workers to pay the costs means lower real wages; for capital, lower profits. The proposals being floated by World Figures suggest a long spread-out of the debt, a lowering of interest (a "write down") to be at least partially subsidized by govern-

ments (directly or via agencies such as the IMF and the World Bank), and perhaps tying the payments to a fixed percentage (24-35%) of a nation's export earnings. What these proposals mean is that the share of the debt to be paid by the working classes and capitals of these debtor nations is to decline (though still remain exorbitant, intensifying struggle over who is to pay what portion of this share). The banks, and behind them the Arab rentier states,

are to accept lower profits (especially the rentier states). The balance is to be paid by governments of the west, which will throw the payment question into a struggle between workers and capital in the creditor nations and between the creditor nations as to which are to try to extract the most from their workers. The "negotiations" will obviously be quite delicate, for lawyers always follow the guns and money.

## On the Very Thought of Solvency

Even a "successful" re-structuring of debt would not deal with the real reasons for the crisis; at most, such an accounting "solution" would postpone the moment of reckoning. However, the very existence of a "debt crisis" does reflect the fact that the "slowdown" has reached its limits and its opposite, "recovery" has to be called forth. But the very thought of recovery brings forth a myriad of questions. Has capital obtained sufficient control of the international proletariat to begin to re-accelerate accumulation? Has a "climate that is better for international business" really been established, as S.S. Ramphal, the Secretary General of the Commonwealth (sic) nations, claims?

On the other side, perhaps capital is being too greedily hasty to claim renewed profitability, perhaps "the world has to be prepared to suffer through four or five years of adjustment," as Toyō Gyohten, the Executive Director of the Bank of Japan, stated? Will recovery only create increased wage demands and social strife in the US and Europe? Will hastened accumulation via recovery produce the "Iran" problem in yet more locales? Can a wage-rise ("Keynesian") solution in countries like Brazil be successful, or will it lead directly to the crisis of Keynesianism imposed by workers of the US and Europe -- more wage, less work? Can social order be maintained when women seize the opening space created by a wage-based economy to attack wage slavery?

As the answer to these questions turns on the intensity and extensivity of international working class response, we turn again to audit the strengths and weaknesses of the "entity".

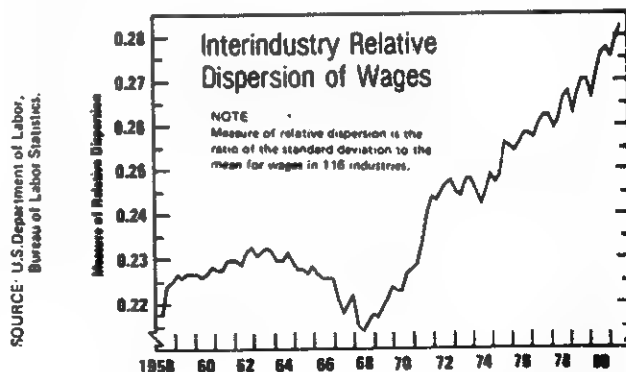
### Audit: US and Europe

--The response of the US working class to the attack of the past three years does not provide room for optimism about the ability of the class to block capital's plans to launch recovery based on more low-waged work and a higher order division of workers. Nonetheless, capital continues to express caution about the US. Reagan is planning for a "recovery" which will re-expand production while maintaining a 10% unemployment rate. Increasingly, the US is to become an export center for primary products and some manufactures as well as a world center of technology. Recovery is

to hasten the bifurcated economy of the "post-industrializers". But Reagan's plans are subject to serious problems, as the debates around "re-industrialization" continue. Further, struggles around so-called "social issues" (in particular, race and sex) have not completely evaporated. For example, Business Week, among others, thinks basic industry workers will quickly escalate wage demands. While the US does not provide optimism, perhaps the working class can become a "loss center" again.

--Europe is another story. Only in the past year has the wage bill begun to decline, having risen through the Depression, unlike in the US. European capital now "realizes that it, too, must reduce the cost of production," sermonized Business Week. However, in France, immigrant Renault workers have forced wage hikes which have broken guidelines imposed by the Socialist government. Britain remains a "mess" despite the glorious victory in the Malvinas. Germany is in recession under a Christian austerity program, facing explosions against capitalistic "life-styles" and US missiles. In Italy, the state's efforts against the workers, aided by the union leadership, have been met by a "hot winter". In sum, western European growth seems slow, with a wage struggle and social struggle against work looming should a recovery develop.

Thus a plan to accelerate the world economy by re-expansion in the US and Europe remains problematic. A US recovery will remain short-lived unless it reveals that the working class has accepted the re-structuring and wage-lowering capital has imposed and will not use the recovery



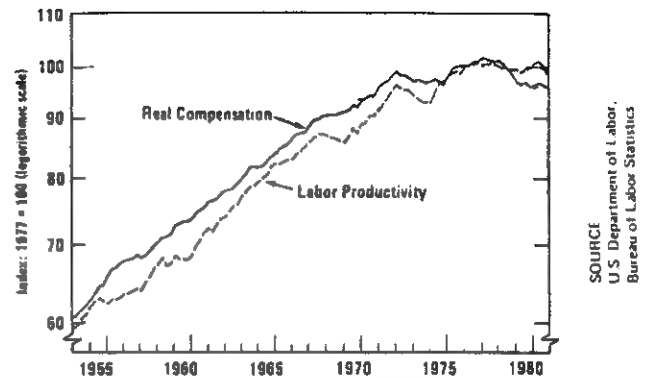
to mount a new attack. If the US is to be a market for the rest of the world, however, 10% unemployment and lowered wages will not help. Certainly no "consumer-led" recovery would be in the offing. Recovery in Europe at this time will clearly be on the basis of a working class that has not had to compromise dramatically and so it could threaten profitability (though providing a "good market").

#### Audit: The Rest of the Planet

While the US and Europe may be problematic, the rest of the world definitely is. For expansion to occur in Latin America, Africa and Asia, both local markets and markets in the US and Europe must expand. This process is two-way, as the Third World now accounts for 40% of US exports and 28% of all OECD exports. The proposal to stabilize debt repayment at one-quarter to one-third of export income, leaving a surplus for expansion, is one element of a planned expansion in which the state would play a major role and the working class would not face the "need for austerity" to repay the loans. However, though it is from an accounting point of view possible for there to be expansion outside of the OECD, it presupposes a definitive change in class relations.

This imperative for new relations between ruling class and working class is a most questionable presupposition. Historically, the forms of defeat of working people in the Third World did not utilize working class struggle as a "motor of development", but rather generally sought to stifle class energies and to simply re-assert older patterns of class domination; there were few experiments in trying to dynamically alter the patterns while retaining the essence. The military juntas, the succession of petty tyrants, liberal wimps; flimsy coalition governments collapsing into military juntas is just an institutional expression of this capitalistically primitive form of class relation. But this must change. As the US and European working class has blocked a level of accumulation deemed "necessary" by capital, a larger share of the materialization of accumulation must shift to the Third World. This can only be done if the institutional structure, both economic and political, be radically transformed.

The essential task in such a shift would be for capital to accept the working class outside of Europe and the US as a new dynamic of development; but to do so would require accepting working class struggle and turning it into a basis of increasing social production. This approach has been flirted with a number of times (e.g., the "Alliance for Progress" in the 1960s) but at the slightest sign of trouble is was abandoned (e.g., with the rise of a Chilean insurgency). But now the flirtation must become serious, for if the



SOURCE  
U.S. Department of Labor,  
Bureau of Labor Statistics

#### Real Hourly Compensation and Output per Hour (Labor Productivity)

rest of the planet is to be integrated into commodity production, a modified Keynesianism will be required.

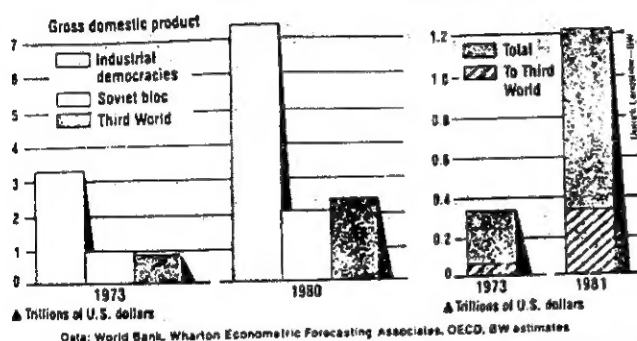
Immediately, however, obstacles arise. First, to take the "lid off" struggle escalates the risk that it will become uncontrollable. Chile remains the classic example, as struggle, which capital sought to turn into production, intensified under Frei, then still more under Allende, until it "got out of hand" and the military, the CIA and Milton Friedman stepped in. However, the result has not created a situation conducive to the needed model of development... it has produced its dismal opposite. Some Chile's may be necessary, even useful as "exemplars", but generally such a form of repression cannot any longer be widespread. Corpses and starving workers are not serious incentives for the creation of a high level of production and consumption. The trick for capital will be to somehow turn class struggle into reformism and work.

The second obstacle is the nature of the local ruling classes. In Latin America, what we might call the "consumptionist" character of the ruling classes will have to change. For example, the President of Mexico could no longer build palaces for his family with state funds, not only because of the "waste", but more importantly because such waste reflects class relations of personal dominance incompatible with the needed formal egalitarianism of a social democracy integrating the working class into government and society. The rural relations of the latifundia must be abolished to allow for agricultural development (as "basic needs" theorists and socialists alike have argued). An increasing part of the masses in the barrios and the favelas must be viewed as potential productivity to be integrated into the market and large-scale production, not simply seen as a reserve army to keep domestic and international wages down. Such a process implies deep struggle within the ruling classes themselves. In Latin America, such struggles have consistently produced military coups which, in turn, have almost universally rejected land reform or

## The Third World's growing economic weight

It has boosted its share of global GDP...

...and of industrial countries' total exports



integration of the urban masses into any "development" project. Peru's Velasco stands out as a recent exception, and his reformism too got "out of hand" and led to a counter-coup.

Just as the creation of the "New South" required a strange coalition of "outside" capital and working class struggle in the 1950s and 1960s, so too must that experience be repeated in the Third World. Yet two major contradictions face such action. One, capital has moved to these locales precisely because of low wages. The existence of a vast reserve army/subsistence sector does not impel capital to raise wages and so "development" possibilities are easily thwarted. Two, the nation with the world's largest economy and most powerful military, the US, is currently governed by a regime which sees the repression of the working class as the only solution to all problems. This will be a major force to keep Third World reformism at the mildest level.

The third obstacle lies in the nature of capitalist development itself. We have noted the movement of capital to the rest of the planet to take advantage of "cheap" labor, contradicting the "need for market expansion". Additionally, most of the development done by the multinationals is capital intensive, "providing" relatively few jobs. This is not because different productive machinery adapted to local needs and local labor-force characteristics cannot be profitably produced, but that the capital intensive mode is still more profitable on a global level, despite the cheapness of labor, for most mass produced goods. How, then, can the "urban masses" be exploited? One proposed solution

is the Chinese model, although at least in Latin America the proportion of people living in urban areas is much higher, and, more important, these people have shown that they refuse to return to "hot sun" even on "their own" subsidized and supported farms.

Capitalistically, the problems outlined come down to the need for a drastic re-organization of the distribution of income and of the relation of income to production. But could an effort to accomplish this by a radical reformism be limited to reformism? Capital would require a ruling class creativity (and working class docility) in Latin America it has not previously demonstrated if development and accumulation are to occur there on a grand scale.

Let us consider each region specifically in relation to its potential contribution to world capitalistic recovery. Sub-Sahara Africa (with the exception of South Africa) is still too marginal to make a difference. The more export oriented small nations of South and East Asia are too small to have a major effect. If they are to expand their exports to other Third World nations, these other nations must develop so as to become markets themselves. But this only introduces all the problems discussed above. The larger nations such as India, containing much capital intensive industry within its borders, seem no more likely and probably less likely to leap to a new capitalistic organization of accumulation than is Latin America.

Thus on a world scale, our balance sheet of debits and credits implies that recovery presumes the abandonment of a Keynesian organization of accumulation in US and Europe and the adoption of a "semi"-Keynesianism for the rest of the planet (except, of course, for the "basket cases"); The word "semi" here refers to a fundamental problem that capital faces with the Third World mass worker in the making, s/he/they know the world is round and that the desires and disguests of the factory worker in Detroit will be perfectly understandable to a similar worker in Sao Paulo. I.e., the Brazilian worker in the 1980's will not be reacting like a Ford worker in the 1920's.

On the contrary, capital faces all throughout the Third World workers who have been "around". So the notion that capital can just simply put the clock back by "industrializing" Latin America, Asia and Africa is wishful thinking.

## Totals, Balances and Red Ink

Now we, as certified struggle accountants, have the responsibility to sum up the columns and give a balanced judgement to our clients as to their viability.

Capital will be able to survive until the end of the century if the working class acquiesces to a bi-polar economy in the US, Europe and Japan and a revival

of Keynesianism in selected parts of the Third World (with endemic starvation, genocide and despair to the areas not "chosen for development"). If not, however, the current world system will be hard-pressed to survive. But will the working class' "acquiescence" be forthcoming? Will a new "social contract" on a world-scale

NO. 1535. LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION RATES, BY SEX, AND FEMALES AS PERCENT OF TOTAL LABOR FORCE FOR SELECTED COUNTRIES, 1960 TO 1980

COUNTRY	LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION RATES										FEMALES AS PERCENT OF TOTAL LABOR FORCE			
	Male					Female								
	1960	1970	1975	1980	1980	1960	1970	1975	1980	1980	1960	1970	1975	1980
United States	42.4	48.9	43.1	50.7	51.7	81.3	65.4	52.3	76.7	39.1	41.9			
Australia	33.1	45.1	49.2	51.2	51.6	42.5	40.2	37.9	31.4	31.9	36.5			
Canada	32.2	47.1	50.2	51.2	51.7	40.2	36.4	34.4	33.4	36.5	39.4			
France	46.4	47.1	47.2	47.2	47.2	47.2	47.2	47.2	47.2	47.2	47.2			
Germany, Fed. Rep. of	49.2	48.1	48.1	48.1	48.1	48.1	48.1	48.1	48.1	48.1	48.1			
Italy	37.1	42.1	42.1	42.1	42.1	42.1	42.1	42.1	42.1	42.1	42.1			
Japan	41.1	41.1	41.1	41.1	41.1	41.1	41.1	41.1	41.1	41.1	41.1			
Sweden	50.1	50.1	50.1	50.1	50.1	50.1	50.1	50.1	50.1	50.1	50.1			
United Kingdom	46.1	50.5	45.2	49.2	48.2	48.2	48.2	48.2	48.2	48.2	48.2			

NA: Not available. Labor force of an area as percent of population 14 years and over. 1979 data.  
Source: Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, Paris, France; unpublished data. Data compiled from national sources.

which includes the former "wretched of the earth" be acceptable? The international complexity of class and national struggle, ranging from armed struggle in El Salvador to reactionary chauvinistic manifestations in Nigeria and India, renders a reading of the situation very problematic, of course.

With this "acquiescence" capital will be able to pull itself slowly, bit by bit, out of its grave over the next decade, perhaps. In the end, several factors would have to be in place:

--New relations with the USSR and its satellites and the beginning of the integration of China into the world economy will be needed. The Soviet bloc is, after all, now ready for a "new leap" in its mode of accumulation.

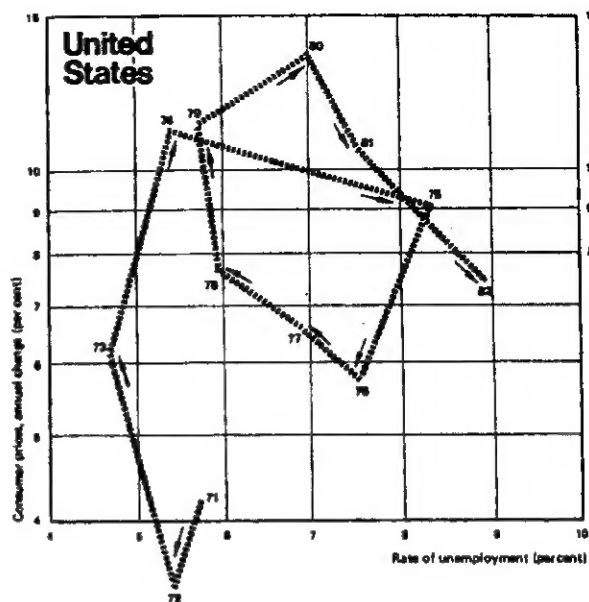
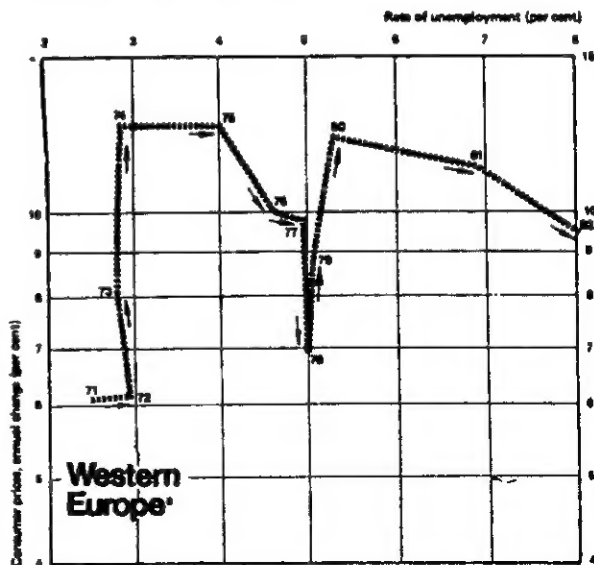
--In Latin America and a number of other Third World locales, capital will have to intensify industrialization and create a strong movement to integrate the working class into the economy and polity, a movement that must include the rural proletariat. The Green Revolution will have to produce a new generation of species that would be both nutritious and require fewer expensive inputs and machinery, thus paving the way for some agrarian reform and the development of a rural, conservative small-farmer class.

---In the US, Europe and Japan, new technologies emerging from what are now only early stages of bio-genetic and computer/information industries will become the leading edge in production in a much larger way than now projected...leading to a totally new mode of growth and repression.

All of these considerations define a "best case" scenario for capital, depending on the simultaneous defeat of the two poles of the world's working class and, with that, a technological breakthrough using working class energy, channeling the defeat into new productive patterns. On the other side, the inability of capital to adequately defeat the working class leaves capital very vulnerable at this point of transition. Though the defeat of the working class by capital can by no means assume the proportions of Chile 1973, much less our "apocalyptic, genocidal" colleague's visions, we must warn our clients that the defeat of capital must always assume drastic, total pro-

portions if it is not simply to be a temporary "reformist" victory. Nonetheless, in this critical stage, temporary setbacks to capital could attain huge significance as capital tries to resurrect itself from its crisis. For in a crisis, small acts amplify far beyond their intentions.

## Inflation and unemployment in Western Europe and the United States



Pedro Abono, C.S.A.

Guido Baldi, C.S.A.

H. Mueller, C.S.A.



1977

The dead remember everything,  
why should they need to forget?  
Remember the blue box of subscribers' addresses,  
remember the tears and pushing on the stoop,  
just remember the shadows of cups after  
the final devious meeting.

The dead can be such a drag.  
They cry at their impotence,  
stretch their hands out to us so imploringly,  
so dramatically,

"O if only we could tell you."  
Stroke our arms  
then just laugh and laugh  
since they don't need to care.  
They are so emotionally immature,  
shadowing our gestures an inch to the left  
of them,

humming over our talking,  
just can't keep themselves from smiling at  
our naivete,

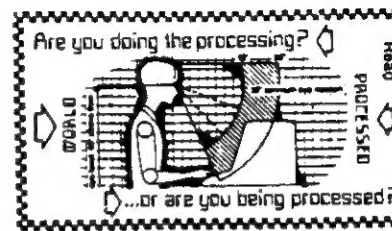
as we so seriously stumble into abysses  
we don't even know we've fallen into.

The dead are sick of our defeat  
foretold and retold  
word for word

from each of the once loved comradely mouths  
that are now so hated,

the very thought of folding lip into lip  
turns them grey and cancerous.

The dead finally lie with us  
in our lonesome beds  
to rise on an elbow  
putting a palm  
on the long nightmare of dawn.



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Piovera

Sleazy, conniving, stretching her tentacles  
to the remotest cells of your flesh  
comes the piovera  
savoring in her contortions  
the feast of blood promised by your shaking limbs.

Persistence is her virtue  
the relentless persistence of a cannibal  
who knows your life is the only meal  
he'll ever get.

Nothing can put her off,  
all retreats  
deliciously wetting her inexhaustible appetite.

She lays relaxed only when sure  
she's got you in her reach.  
As your veins open and, drop by drop,  
your blood is spilling,  
she even assumes a detached posture,  
eating you up with the casual  
indifference of a well-fed god.

At last, when of your head, arms, entrails  
nothing remains but a big belch  
she closes, momentarily satisfied,  
her innumerable eyes.

She then sprawls, to blissfully digest  
the precious juices of your self,  
restoring in her acquired oblivion  
her infinite will to kill.

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